Chronicles

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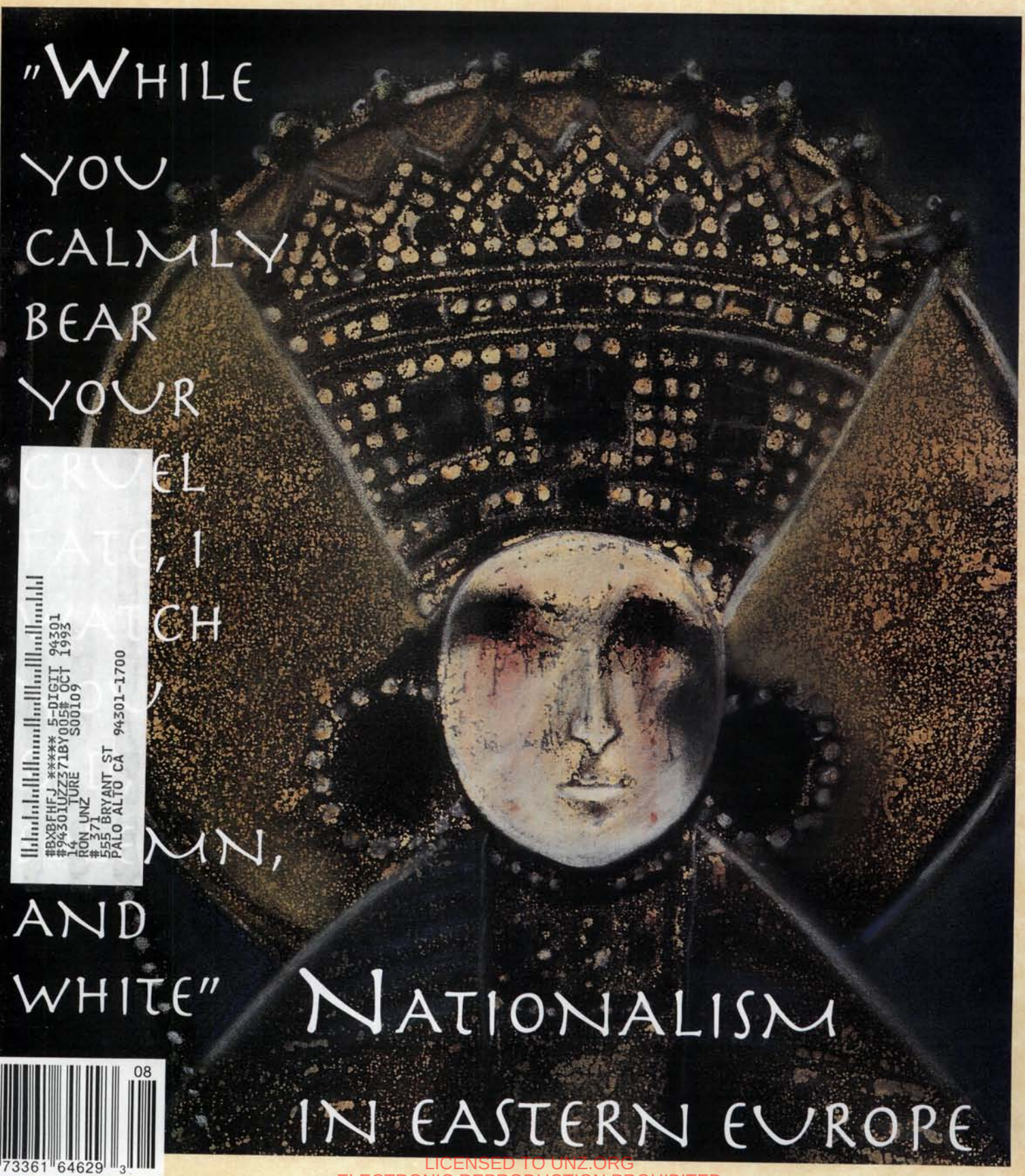

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On 'Beauty and the Beast'

When I took my daughter Lauren to see Walt Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, like everyone else in the audience I was overwhelmed. Disney, producer of *Snow White* and other films that have long been part of our very heritage, was back.

The animation is stupendous, as are the orchestration and lyrics to the songs. The barroom scene where Gaston shows off his high-octane testosterone and herculean brawn, as well as the sequence in which the personified candlestick, Lumière, sings "Be Our Guest," are two of the most captivating moments I've ever seen on film.

That's why I read with interest Mary and Leon Podles' article on the film in *Chronicles* (March 1993). In the second paragraph they write, "Disney is full of attacks upon the sensibilities of the politically correct," noting that *Beauty and the Beast* "perpetrates the most harmful of sex-role caricatures . . . the men in [Belle's] life are a non-nurturing chauvinist lot: an absentminded professor, a macho jock, his Best Buddy, and the Beast, who is, of course, a beast."

I don't know anything about Jean Cocteau's version of the film or understand the other mumbo-jumbo they wrote about, but I do know they're off the mark in their analysis of the film's stereotypes. A third or fourth viewing of the film (my daughters have the videotape) shows that Disney produced a film whose subtext is unequivocally politically correct.

For instance, the antagonist in the film, Gaston, is, as they say, a "macho jock." But that's not all. True, he is quite large, "as big as a barge," he sings, but he also hunts, wants a passel of kids, and expects Belle to be the traditional housewife, all of which, in this day and age, are verboten views. As was amply demonstrated by Belle herself. When Gaston stomps into her house to propose matrimony, telling her exactly what he expects of a wife—the kids, the cooking, the housecleaning—Belle rolls her eyes and says something like, "Yeah, right. What planet are you from?"

By contrast, the only three women in town who admire Gaston's manly virtues are stereotypical, dizzy-blonde triplets who swoon and flutter their eyes when the musky fellow ambles by in town. Get it? Stupid women like men such as Gaston. Intelligent women, those who read lots of books like Belle, do not.

Disney makes this subtle yet profound point at the end of the film, too. When Belle finally tells the Beast she loves him, which turns him back into a human being, the result is a very *effeminate*-looking fellow. Unlike Gaston, with his booming voice, chiseled face, and towering muscular presence, the newly spawned Prince speaks softly and has downy features, a normal if not endomorphic Alan Alda look. The sensitive Prince wins Belle's affection with tenderness, whereas the Neanderthal's unsuccessful courtship was the metaphorical equivalent of knocking her on the bean with the thigh bone of a dinosaur.

These characterizations aren't all that surprising when you look at the people who animated and scored the film. The program 20/20 gave viewers a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the film. Again, it was amazing, showing bona fide creative genius at work. But a quick glance at the physical characteristics and mannerisms of the crew sheds light on the qualities of the characters they created. Not one of the animators or directors, most of whom were men, was what I would call a tower of masculinity. Quite frankly, the head honcho was a wispy little pencil-neck—the kid in grade school who couldn't hold on to his lunch money.

Mostly they looked like a bunch of pansies to me, and reporter Bob Brown inadvertently let the cat out of the bag, at least for those of us on the lookout for movies and television programs with unsavory or sinister messages aimed at our children: "The music [of the theme song] has an emotional pull beyond what's on screen because of a tragedy that occurred since we were last here. On March 14, 1991, the song's Academy Award-winning lyricist . . . died of AIDS at the age of 40."

If all this sounds a little farfetched, try the following experiment, especially you parents who bought *The Little Mermaid*, which was produced by the same crowd who gave us *Beauty and the Beast*. Take a look at the castle on the front

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cover of the video case. About dead center, buried amongst the pointed spires and turrets, you'll see something that doesn't look like part of a castle at all. That's because what you'll see is a phallic symbol.

Disney's back, all right, but parents of the 90's like me are getting a little more for our money than parents like mine got for theirs.

—R. Cort Kirkwood
Arlington, VA

Mary and Leon Podles Reply:

We disagree with Mr. Kirkwood's analysis. We find that the logic of the Disney story remains true to the original folktale of heterosexual love, in which the young woman overcomes her revulsion for the rough side of the male personality (let's face it, the Beast *is* a beast) and learns to love him anyway, and in turn her love transforms and civilizes the Beast into the Prince, the mature and loving masculine man.

Gaston represents the man who is not transformed by woman's gentler nature: not every man is, to the detriment of society. He may tout the traditional values of home and family; he's still a jerk. This is not to say that everyone who has a traditional family is also a jerk. After all, he is only a cartoon character. The girls who swoon over him are caricatures too: some women are silly, and some silly women are blonde.

We would also argue that the Beast-turned-Prince didn't look all that wimpy to us. His kind of tenderness, in the 40 seconds or so that we saw him transformed, seemed proper to the man in love. As for his androgyny, we can only say that to us he mostly just looked young. But then we are of a certain age. Youthful beauty is to some extent androgynous; it is, we suspect, nature's way of making the parties to heterosexual attractions different enough to be intriguing, but not so different as to be frightening.

As for the orientation, morality, and agenda of the Disney artists, we do not deny that traces of homosexual rhetoric can be detected by the wary. Yes, we recognized what they were getting at when Gaston says, "Must our children be sacrificed to appease his unnatural appetites?" We know who is accused of using such language, and by whom.

But whatever their practices and personal agenda may be, they have respected the integrity of the story and conveyed it in their version. Should we not judge the work of art as it exists, regardless of what we may think of the artists? This was our point in the main body of the article: that stereotypes, in this case folktale types of courting heterosexual lovers, convey truths. The p.c. insist that all stereotypes, complimentary or not, must go. We might, if we were more prompt and diligent writers, have used *Aladdin* as our example. It contains the rankest of stereotypes of Arabs, yet the story is delightful. Perhaps some of the artists involved were Jewish, and some of them even Zionists. Does this mean that they intended *Aladdin* as anti-Palestinian propaganda? We think not. It's just a fairy tale. If *Beauty and the Beast* were to be *used* as anti-heterosexual propaganda, we would rightly regard the users with suspicion, but not the artists who made it, and certainly not the work of art.

On 'Beauty and Art'

Your March issue ("Art in the 90's: Visions and Values") was balm to a battered spirit. My sculptor husband (deceased) was punished professionally for his stubborn adherence to the belief that the best art serves truth and beauty. My own sculpture and, regrettably, that of our son is ignored with a vengeance. I am forwarding the March issue to his New York studio.

For those who anticipate the ascendancy of truth and beauty as manifestation of a higher power, the present state of the visual arts is discouraging. Biased art history is disruptive, but bold lies, repeated for gain, corrupt the present and endanger the future. Millions of buzzing words whirling around putrid corpses do eventually die from exposure. But living artists, eager to become sacrificial pawns for commerce, seem unaware of the deadly cost to themselves and their culture. Today, in full public view, ugly corruption is hawked and glorified to the confusion of all. Who benefits when scorn and ridicule are heaped on artists who value life and want to share a positive vision? The noblest aspirations wither in an unremitting desert.

There is comfort in the thought that reverent or joyous art, wrought in the past, has never lost its power. As surely as a good life serves holistic purpose, so a deeply felt and disciplined art is substance able to inspire, mystify, reinforce, and redeem human hearts. I recall that every quest and every pilgrimage had its origin in a solitary reverent heart. I pray daily for strength to persist.

—Beverly Frazier
Del Mar, CA

LIBERAL ARTS

SEX ED

Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois, sponsored a "Great Condom Rating Contest" last spring. The promotion, which the university health service organized as part of an effort to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, made available to students 5,000 plastic baggies stuffed with seven brands of condoms. The baggies included a wallet-size instruction sheet and a survey asking participants to rate the seven brands as to their durability and sensuality. Health service coordinators Steve Lux and Michael P. Haines argued that humor helps break through the anxiety surrounding the subject of sex, although they emphasized that the contest was one of several serious programs the university has instituted in response to statistics indicating that 75 percent of Northern's students are sexually active.

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EASTERN EUROPE'S recent "experiment" with socialism illustrates some useful principles about slavery. Slave labor is generally recognized as less productive than free labor, and with the collapse of the Soviet Empire it has become obvious that collective property (socialism) is less productive than private property (capitalism). From these premises several conclusions follow: not only that free labor and private property represent the best of all possible worlds, but that a system combining slavery *and* socialism must be the worst—that if one had no choice but to be a slave, private slavery as in antebellum America would be preferable to the kind of collective slave ownership that Eastern Europe recently experienced.

The failure of this socialist "experiment" in Eastern Europe gives credence to this conclusion. Just as privately owned slaves were threatened with punishment if they tried to escape, in all of socialist Eastern Europe emigration was outlawed and punished as a criminal offense, if necessary by shooting those who tried to run away. Moreover, all over Eastern Europe anti-loafing laws existed, and governments could assign to any citizen any task and all rewards and punishments. Thus the classification of the Soviet system as *slavery*. Unlike a private slave owner, however, Eastern European slaveholders—from Lenin to Gorbachev—could not sell or rent their subjects in a labor market and privately appropriate the receipts from the sale or rental of their "human capital." Hence the system's classification as *socialist* slavery.

Yet without markets for slaves and slave labor, matters must become worse, not better, for the slave. For without prices for slaves and their labor a slaveowner can no longer rationally allocate his "human capital." He cannot determine the scarcity-value of his various, heterogeneous pieces of human capital, and he cannot determine the opportunity-cost of using this capital in any given employment nor compare it to the corresponding revenue. Accordingly, permanent misallocations, waste, and "consumption" of human capital must result.

The empirical evidence indicates as much. While it rarely happened that a private slaveowner killed his slave—the ultimate "consumption" of human capital—the socialist slavery of Eastern Europe resulted in millions of murdered civilians. Under private slave ownership the health and life expectancy of slaves generally increased. In the Soviet Empire health-care standards steadily deteriorated and life expectancies actually declined in recent decades. The level of practical training and education of private slaves generally rose. That of socialist slaves fell. The rate of reproduction among privately owned slaves was positive. Among the slave populations of Eastern Europe it was generally negative. The rates of suicide, self-incapacitation, family breakups, promiscuity, "illegitimate" births, birth defects, venereal diseases, abortions, alcoholism, and dull or brutish behavior among private slaves were high. But all such rates of "human capital consumption" were higher still for the socialist slaves of the former Soviet Empire. And similarly: while morally senseless and violent behavior among privately owned slaves occurred after their emancipation, brutalization of social life in the aftermath of the abolition of socialist slavery has been far worse, revealing an even greater degree of moral degeneration. Clearly, far more than any material destruction, this human wreckage—both physical and moral—is socialism's saddest legacy.

—*Hans-Hermann Hoppe*

REGARDING THE INAUGURAL "poem" . . . Joan Rivers. Atrium. A poet *manqué* without a poem. Or even a coherent thought. But sexually, racially, politically correct. Living proof Darwin is wrong. The fittest have not survived. Once mute. Now, unfortunately, speaking. Mind-numbing gibberish that would make Ferlinghetti puke. She a species that has not, alas, departed. A liberal dinosaur, a dry token.

This day crying out. But about *what*? To *whom*? And nothing rhymes. Privileged beyond her wildest imaginings. Widely hailed by other frauds. Other shadows with no place to hide. Human Oaklands with no there there. Black. A brooding darkness. Created a little lower than your average men's room graffiti. No destiny other than to bore to tears. Angels shrieking and running for cover. She rushing in where they fear to tread. Her mouth spilling words in no particular order. Bald-faced ignorance. Cant cubed.

The Rocks, too, cry out—in pain. I know how they feel. Mindless meanderings. Beamed around the world. Only God knows what those in Papua New Guinea think. Somewhere, Robert Frost weeps. Each of us wondering: Huh? Afraid to say this. Mayans everywhere considering a class-action suit; Angelous contemplating a name change. Each of us a bordered country, an island. All of us inhibited by our intelligence. Unable to dig it. Grieved because we have a will to meaning. Pondering puzzling phrases. Heads shaking. Debris on our breast. Mere words. Stupid. Dumb. Prose pollution. A verbal oil spill.

Rocks? Rivers? Trees? *Speaking* trees?! The Tree and the Rock are one? One *what*? The *Kru*? What the hell is (are?) the *Kru*? A black thing? I don't get it. But, yes, I'm praying for a dream. You bet. The dream being that this, this—this utterance will, at some point, make sense. No way. Hopes repeatedly dashed.

Planted by the TV river, falling into it. Going under for the third time. Forced to watch a seeker, desperate for gain. I, the victimized Inaugural-watcher. This bright morning becoming history that, indeed, cannot be unlived. Too bad. A tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying less than nothing.

Hearts cast down. Hopes stillborn. Eyes crossing. Brows furrowing. Remote control buttons being punched. Other channels being sought. A dream deferred, becoming a nightmare. The English language being assassinated. Where's the Secret Service when we *really* need them?

The horizon, too, leaning forward—having fallen asleep. The pulse of this fine day has ceased. A Code Blue. Dial 911. No life signs. Death without dignity. Our palms sweat. A fear of being yoked with this "poet" eternally. Cruel and unusual punishment if ever there was one. Horror in every classroom in America that there will be a pop quiz on

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this abomination that will be 40 percent of one's final grade.

The blessed Mastodon. And those other species no longer here. I envy them. They have the grace to look up and out at those Rocks, Rivers, Trees—and, yes, up and out at the Kru, too—and say simply, very simply, and truthfully, with hope: we did not have to hear this.

—John Lofton

HOWARD STERN, New York City's outrageous "shock jock" of station WXRK, was fined last year by the Federal Communications Commission. It was another example of the cultural double standard that is now so pervasive it would seem to have been written into law. Stern ran afoul of the FCC's ban on "indecency." One doesn't have to appreciate Stern's politics—he's a Republican, an admirer of Ronald Reagan, and a supporter of Senator Al D'Amato, who is a frequent guest on his program—or his brand of scatalogical humor to perceive a troubling aspect to this case.

Howard Stern originated raunch radio in Washington, D.C., in 1981. The FCC's attempt to curb "obscenity" over the public airwaves dates back to the 1960's when, in response to a George Carlin routine on New York's WBAI, it established its "seven dirty words" policy. As a result of a complaint against Stern in 1986, the agency expanded its definition of indecency to include programming that is "patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards." The FCC and supporters of broadcaster rights have been sparring over this issue in federal courts, with the latest ruling, by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, holding that broadcasters must have at least some period of the day when they are free to carry indecent material.

The new criterion of "community standards" is fraught with ambiguity. Stern's show is the highest rated program in its time slot, and it also does well in several other major cities. He has a particularly strong following among young men. The millions of people who tune him in regularly can surely claim to constitute a segment of the "community."

Howard Stern's four-hour daily morning show features humor that can best be described as vulgar. He manifests a preoccupation with sexual organs and bodily functions, and he seems to make it a point to insult as many minorities as he can. Aided by his black woman sidekick, he reserves some of his nastiest comments for women and blacks. His view that women are primarily sex objects is a staple of his shtick, and he has joked about slavery.

But tastelessness is rampant in the electronic media these days, as interviewers and gabmeisters, in an effort to keep up with the competition, continually push the boundaries of acceptability to the limits. In its own way, television's endless talk-show parade of transvestites, transsexuals, S&M enthusiasts, and devotees of every bizarre practice that the shows' producers can dig up is as offensive as what Howard Stern is doing. Yet Oprah, Sally Jessy, Geraldo, and Donahue have rarely, if ever, been heard to utter a statement that hasn't been cleared with the liberal thought police.

When one considers what passes for radio commentary, it becomes especially difficult to justify the FCC's action. A black-owned station in New York City, WLIB, features virulent anti-white, anti-Semitic, and anti-Korean rhetoric. On its call-in shows, folks have advocated killing cops. The station has close ties to Mayor Dinkins; local politicians frequently appear on it; and Governor Cuomo has praised it as "a source of strength and guidance for the African-American community." Needless to say, WLIB has not been punished by the FCC. Other black-oriented radio stations play rap and reggae music containing lyrics that urge violence against various groups.

The case of Howard Stern and the larger question of censorship also highlight the perennial, and probably irreconcilable, fissure in conservative ranks between libertarians and traditionalists. After all, it has been groups like Terry Rakolta's Americans for Responsible Television and the Reverend Donald Wildmon's National Federation for Decency (now called the American Family Association) that have long been pressuring the FCC to act against what they see as growing immorality in the mass media.

The issue of censorship is a complex one, and it is naive or dishonest to contend that what passes over the nation's airwaves has no effect on listeners and viewers. But if we are to have rules governing speech, they should be enforced against all offenders, not just against those deemed politically incorrect. Once again, when it comes to freedom of speech, it is clear that some speakers are freer than others.

—Richard Irving

SUPERBOWL XXVII last winter was unremarkable except for Michael Jackson's halftime extravaganza. The climax of the performance was Jackson's "Heal the World" anthem, which he dedicated "from the children of Los Angeles to the children of the world." Much like the early 80's hymn "We Are the World," which Jackson composed with Lionel Richie, "Heal the World" is a weepy testimonial to the power of love, dreams, and fraternity:

> Heal the world
> Make it a better place
> For you and for me
> And the entire human race
> There are people dying
> If you care enough for the living
> Make a better place
> For you and for me.

In the Superbowl halftime show, these lyrics were accompanied by children (the usual United Colors of Benetton) swaying back and forth and balloons floating up into the Pasadena sky.

But Jackson's plea for human charity and compassion did not end at the commercial break. For his love-and-song-fest was followed by an equally sappy advertisement for his new Heal the World Foundation. Featuring clips of starving and suffering tots, this spot urged viewers touched by the secular revival they had just witnessed to call Jackson's toll-free number and make a donation to an organization "devoted to improving conditions for children throughout the world."

Intrigued, I called the foundation at 1-800-HEAL-123 (the number itself made me question if this was all for real). Football fans must be a charitable bunch, since all circuits were busy. Trying again later, I managed to get an answering machine. The recording went something like this: "This is Michael Jackson. Thank you for calling the Heal the World Foundation. . . . To make a $35 donation by credit card, please press one now. To make a donation of a different amount, or to talk to one of our representatives, press two now." I pressed two, in the hopes of talking to a real person who could give me the low-

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down on the organization. Instead, my call was directed to another machine, which instructed me to leave my name, address, and message—and a credit card number to which my donation could be charged. Insulted at this impersonal system of dial-a-good-deed, I left what I hoped was an ironic expression of my "curiosity" about the foundation and a request for further information.

Over two months later, I received a slick brochure that describes the foundation's beginnings last fall with relief missions to Romania and Sarajevo, as well as its plans to focus in the short term "on helping the children of Los Angeles, America's most diverse city, and the site of last year's civil disturbance." Complete with a customized logo (a black hand and a white hand holding a globe with a Band-Aid over the crack running down its middle) and a photograph of Jackson holding and kissing a smiling baby, the pamphlet urges its reader to "help Michael heal our children." The brochure came with a letter, which gives extra incitement to charge a contribution by offering a Heal the World T-shirt to donors of $35 or more and a Heal the World sweatshirt to donors of $60 or more.

Like the Chicago radio station that asked listeners to call in and donate ten dollars by credit card to the children of Cabrini Green last Christmas, Jackson and his foundation are basing their plea for charity on the assumption that we Americans are incurably shallow, even in our desire to help others. Our demand for instant gratification apparently extends even to our humanitarian instincts: pictures of starving Somalian and neglected American children stir us to want to "do our part" (and relieve our guilt), but we are only willing to rouse ourselves from our daily routine if no hassle is involved. Charity has become as easy as dialing an 11-digit phone number and giving a 16-digit VISA number from the comfort of our armchair. Like telephone sex, whereby callers pay money for sexual stimulation, telephone charity allows us to feel good without requiring any commitment or expenditure of time and energy. More importantly, we send our money across town, across the country, or around the world without working to alleviate, or even acknowledging, the problems in our own neighborhoods—or even in our own families.

In Michael Jackson's case, the man who sets himself the immodest goal of "healing the world" blames his parents for robbing him of his childhood by forcing him into show business and discountenances his sister LaToya, who smeared her entire family a year or so ago in a much-publicized book. While Jackson's activities and appearances during recent years (opening his Neverland Valley ranch to children suffering from life-threatening illnesses; visiting a Washington, D.C., girl who was mauled by four dogs; and creating Michael Jackson Productions Ltd. to "harness the mass media for the improvement of this troubled world"—to take just a few examples) appear to demonstrate genuine concern, they are acts of a lonely man groping for some kind of purpose. His statement at the Grammy Awards ceremony (at which he was presented with a Grammy Legends Award by his sister Janet), "I want to thank all the children of the world, including the sick and the deprived....I am so sensitive to your pain," is the desperate cry of a man who is himself sick and deprived.

—*Christine Haynes*

FEDERAL VOTING procedures are now being challenged in ways that could undermine the very integrity of the franchise. And there is almost no public discussion of the issue and little effective opposition.

The idea is to increase voter participation by relaxing voter registration procedures and qualification requirements. We are told that low voter turnout is due to "discriminatory" requirements imposed on people who want to vote but can't deal with the "hardship" of registration. So the effort becomes one of turning nonvoters into voters, which sounds like an unassailable, civic-minded idea. The trouble is that it presents a nefarious potential for influencing electoral outcomes by manipulating the composition of the electorate. The question "Who votes?" becomes crucial. It becomes the political battleground.

Though voting requirements vary in detail from state to state, some basic qualifications have prevailed throughout the country since 1789. Two of these are that voters reside in the jurisdiction in which they vote and that they are United States citizens. These are not specified in the Constitution but are generally accepted assumptions at the core of our idea of democratic government as established by the Founding Fathers.

The residency requirement is under heavy assault, particularly in large cities where community responsibility has eroded and where groups are encouraged to resist authority. Illinois passed a law in December 1992 providing for voter registration of people without a residential address. An executive of the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless greeted this development enthusiastically, saying, "The people who are homeless consider it a great victory. It has been an empowering experience for them. It is significant because voting is a way of restoring the citizenship of homeless people."

Even without legislative sanction, the 1992 election provided an opportunity for getting homeless people, along with other nonvoters, to the polls on an organized basis in various cities across the country. It required no furtive approach. Indeed, it was publicized as a community service program to "get out the vote." Political activists rounded up homeless people, herded them into buses with the promise of free coffee and doughnuts, and then took them to the polls, offering free advice and assistance in casting the vote. In San Francisco, for example, with the cooperation of voting officials, this innovative plan for group voting went into action in advance of the election. It didn't happen without substantial organization and expense. It was a practice run for even more ambitious poll-packing in 1994 and 1996.

Most states require advance registration by voters. But these procedures have already been relaxed in several states. Even where they still prevail, local election officials often make their own rules and procedures, exercising a surprising amount of autonomy, especially in larger states.

The political opportunity for changing the composition of the electorate comes to a head in the so-called "Motor Voter" legislation that was passed in Congress in 1992, vetoed by President Bush, and subsequently passed again this year. It provides for automatic voter registration of persons who apply for a driver's license or renewal, and for registration by mail. It also requires various federal, state, and county agencies to implement programs for mass voter registration: expensive projects imposing heavy costs on states and local governments that already face serious financial difficulty.

Since application for a driver's license

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has nothing to do with citizenship, and since welfare applicants include many noncitizens, the citizenship requirement for voting won't be easy to maintain. Most states require a prospective voter to testify to citizenship, but in actual practice there is no easy way to confirm it. After all, citizenship is virtually irrelevant in everyday life. We are seldom, if ever, asked to prove it. We carry no identification that proves it, and there are no master lists. Election officials, when speaking candidly, will acknowledge that the citizenship of prospective voters cannot realistically be verified.

Fraudulent voting has occurred before in the United States, but only in isolated circumstances and always within the framework of overall public concurrence in traditional assumptions about voter qualification, including residency, citizenship, minimum age, and personal commitment to community well-being and the democratic system. But today we proceed toward social and political tribalism in which the individual's connection to community or national welfare is tenuous. Our cultural cohesion has disintegrated before our eyes and left the integrity of voting weakened and vulnerable.

While we sit and watch, we should demand explanation. If we are to abandon residency and citizenship requirements for voter qualification, we should do it with a clear understanding and knowledge that this is what the country wants. If, on the other hand, these major alterations in the voting process are made without public discussion, then it is a case of massive fraud.

The history of nations, recent as well as past, demonstrates that nationhood collapses when fundamental values cease to breed a sense of national responsibility. When there is no longer a commitment to the state that binds diverse populations together, then the contract between the individual and the state loses its meaning. And when a democracy loses the political means for preserving the integrity of its elections, it loses much of its reason for being.

—Stan Langland

OBITER DICTA: *Chronicles'* May issue on foreign lobbying ("Who Owns America?") continues to receive national attention. Patrick Buchanan and William Hawkins, for example, both recently discussed the issue and the questions it raised in their syndicated columns.

Thomas Fleming and Allan Carlson also participated in Patrick Buchanan's May conference on "Winning the Culture War," organized by Mr. Buchanan's American Cause Foundation. Allan Carlson and *Chronicles* contributing editor Samuel Francis spoke on a panel entitled "Culture and Power," and Thomas Fleming addressed the issue of "Art and the Culture War." Other *Chronicles* contributors participating in the conference were Paul Gottfried, E. Christian Kopff, and Claes Ryn.

Our editor described the conference as the most successful gathering of conservatives he has ever attended—or heard of. Instead of the usual hot air about family values, the speakers addressed serious issues: moral education, the collapse of standards in higher education, the homosexual takeover of the culture, the dispossession of Middle Americans. Some of the best talks were given by artists—Frederick Hart, Fred Turner, Reed Armstrong—who argued for a spiritual and unpoliticized understanding of culture and its conflicts. Mr. Buchanan was accused, throughout his campaign, of being a "know-nothing," but he has succeeded in putting together a more serious and "highbrow" conference on American culture than anything the right has ever attempted. And better even than the speakers was the audience, 400-some energetic and serious people who could follow and applaud arguments with which they did not always agree, who could entertain controversy without losing sight of their principles, and who clearly see Mr. Buchanan's movement as the best hope for America.

Principalities & Powers

by Samuel Francis

Crossing the Line

On April 29, 1993, the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs held a confirmation hearing for Roberta Achtenberg, President Clinton's nominee for the position of Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. Like most nominees, Miss Achtenberg brought along members of her family to lend her support during her hour-long ordeal and fondly introduced them to the committee. But, because Miss Achtenberg is an admitted lesbian, the first "family member" she introduced was "my beloved partner, Judge Mary Morgan." She also brought her rabbi. The hearing room must have looked a bit like Maya Angelou's Inaugural poem come to life.

Even though neither the beloved partner nor the rabbi opened her or his mouth throughout the proceeding, Miss Achtenberg's subtle exploitation of religious authority to legitimize her open sexual perversion could not have been missed, but dragging them along turned out to be unnecessary after all. One would have thought that the appropriate reaction from the assembled senators would have been to tell Miss Achtenberg—and the President who nominated her—that the open practice of sexual abnormality inherently disqualifies a person from serving the people of the United States in a position of public trust and that it was an insult to the Congress as well as to the citizens it represents for an acknowledged lesbian even to show up at the hearing, let alone to thrust the fleshly evidence of her repellent habit before the committee's and the public's eyes. Yet, though four members of the committee voted against her nomination, not a one of them uttered a word of disapproval of her perversion, her immorality, or her grotesque tastelessness.

As the debate on the Achtenberg nomination developed, it soon became clear how the lines were being drawn. The committee chairman, liberal Democratic Senator Donald Riegle, Jr.,

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of Michigan, openly praised the nominee for trampling down yet one more vineyard where the grapes of public morals are stored. "In a sense," he spouted, "you're crossing one of those invisible lines that we have in our society in terms of this issue that is there, raised by some with respect to sexual orientation. I think it has no part in the suitability of you to serve in this job." Mr. Riegle's thoughts appeared to be at one with those of his colleagues who also supported her. One of the main purposes, and perhaps the whole purpose, of the nomination was precisely to cross, if not to erase, the "line" of which Mr. Riegle spoke—to discard once and for all the notion that the sexual life and sexual orientation of a nominee are relevant to the nominee's capacity to serve in public office.

Moreover, liberal Democrats were not the only ones to take this position. In the course of the confirmation hearings, Miss Achtenberg received some tough questions from conservative Republican Senator Lauch Faircloth of North Carolina about her blatant political bludgeoning of the Boy Scouts while she was a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Miss Achtenberg repeatedly used her position to stop the Scouts from using public school buildings in San Francisco because they refused to hire homosexuals as Scoutmasters, and she also pressured the United Way of the Bay area to withdraw its six-figure financial donations to the Scouts for the same reason. In the course of wrestling with Mr. Faircloth's questions, Miss Achtenberg was evasive if not actually perjurious, and similar themes were taken up by other Republican opponents during the floor debate.

But neither Mr. Faircloth nor conservative Mississippi Republican Senator Trent Lott, the main critic of Miss Achtenberg during debate on the Senate floor, ever challenged her "crossing of the line" or the propriety of her sexual habits. Mr. Lott indeed went so far as to "re-emphasize that the issue before us today is not one of sexual preference or orientation. It is whether the nominee is qualified and temperamentally fit for the position to which he or she may be nominated." During the whole debate, which ended with her overwhelming confirmation, only one senator—Jesse Helms—ever questioned whether the line should be crossed. "We are crossing the threshold," Mr. Helms declared clearly, "into the first time in the history of America that a homosexual, a lesbian, has been nominated by a President of the United States for a top job in the U.S. government. That is what the issue is."

For his pains, Mr. Helms was, of course, at once subjected to the vilification of his colleagues—hardly a new experience for him, since that is the treatment regularly administered these days to those who resist crossing cultural and moral lines, and Mr. Helms has long made a distinguished career of standing athwart lines that no one else dares defend—with Senator Carol Moseley-Braun of Illinois gurgling that "I am frightened to hear the politics of fear and divisiveness and of hatred rear its ugly head on this floor" and Senator Riegle himself proclaiming that Mr. Helms' remarks "reflected poorly on the United States Senate."

This, then, is the position in which the nation now stands: a senator who objects to the nomination of an open homosexual to a high public office is condemned by his colleagues as a fearmonger, a bigot, and an exponent of hatred and is told he is a disgrace to the Senate, while the pervert herself is held up as a moral paragon. That is what it means to cross the line of which Mr. Riegle and Mr. Helms spoke, since the line marks not only what is considered suitable conduct for public office but also what *a fortiori* is suitable in private life and personal judgments. If moral impropriety does not bar a person from holding public office, why should it color our private judgment about the person? The acceptance of Miss Achtenberg's nomination, then, crosses more than one line, and that too was a large part of its purpose. By nominating an open homosexual for a sub-Cabinet-level position, Mr. Clinton took a giant step—the biggest ever taken by any President—to declare homosexuality a normal and legitimate form of sexual conduct and to rescind the traditional moral and social sanctions against it.

Yet what emerges even more clearly than the sly normalization of perversion that the liberal left has pulled off is the total unfitness of the Republican Party to resist this moral and cultural revolution. Indeed, if one fact has become apparent about the Republican Party this year, it is that as a whole it not only does not want to bear any banners in the nation's continuing cultural war but also does not even understand how to do so. The fighting of that war consists precisely in the ability and the willingness to discern the "lines" and "thresholds" across which new norms are smuggled and old ones abandoned, and the Republicans have shown themselves to be chronically myopic when it comes to perceiving such boundaries.

It was not, after all, the Republican right that initially resisted Mr. Clinton's proposed lifting of the ban against homosexuals in the Armed Forces but Democrat Sam Nunn with the support of Colin Powell and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It was not the Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee who refused to confirm lawbreaker Zoë Baird as Attorney General but moderate Democrats like Arizona's Dennis DeConcini, bolstered by the spontaneous popular revulsion registered against her by thousands of phone calls to Senate offices. Nor did most Republicans raise serious objections to any of the other bizarre characters whom the new administration called to office: Donna Shalala at Health and Human Services, Janet Reno at the Justice Department, Ron Brown at the Commerce Department, etc.

But the Republican performance during the Achtenberg debate is the clearest instance so far of the party's own unsuitability to serve as the representative of Americans committed to the conservation of their moral and social norms in their public manifestations. What seems to drive the party, however, is not, as with liberal Democrats, the open embrace of cultural revolution so much as it is a profound ignorance of cultural norms themselves, how they might be defended, and how they are being discarded by their professed enemies. What Republicans fear is being called bigots, and they fear that label because many of them really are bigots — that is, persons who harbor prejudices against those who violate cultural norms but are so ignorant of the valid reasons for their prejudices that they are unable to defend them and are ashamed to admit to them. The Republican opponents of Miss Achtenberg instinctively knew something is wrong with her appointment, but they were totally unable to express, either to themselves or to the nation, what it was, with the result that they were unable to offer any compelling reasons for opposing her.

In the case of "sexual orientation," as the current cant for perversion is known,

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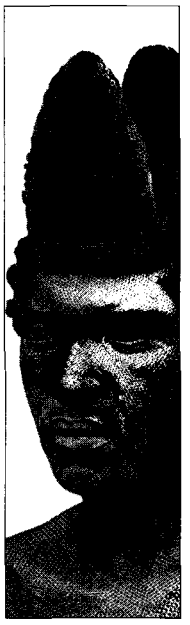
the reasons for regarding it as relevant to public office-holding are really not difficult. Any society must regulate and discipline sexual impulses and must do so in terms of what is morally permissible as well as what is socially tolerable. In the absence of social and moral norms governing such sexual relationships as those of husband and wife, parent and child, elder and youth, and male and female generally, the human condition would indeed come to resemble Hobbes' anarchic state of nature, since there would be no ready means to prevent the spontaneous sexual exploitation of the weak by the strong, and each act of exploitation would at once lead to the violence of jealousy and the extraction of revenge for transgression of sexual rights and relationships. Indeed, American sexual life already resembles just such a jungle, as the brutalization of women and children and the violence of homosexuals explodes, in large part because the abandonment of norms governing sexual conduct encourages opportunities for exploitation, revenge, and jealousy. One such norm has always been that those whose own lives are not governed by norms should not govern others.

Unlike the neurotically repressive sexual codes of Victorian times, healthy individuals and societies recognize the power of sexuality and allow for its satisfaction, but movements like that of the queer militants today demand far more than that. What they demand—and Miss Achtenberg has been in the forefront of this—is that men and women be defined through their sexuality, that sexuality become the most important measure of ourselves. The power of sexual impulses in most human beings is such that when the norms that govern them are weakened, sexuality escalates into such a consuming preoccupation that it becomes the defining dimension of the personality, with other dimensions being suppressed or ignored. It would not occur to a sexually normal male heterosexual nominated to Miss Achtenberg's position to bring along his girl friend or his mistress to his confirmation hearing and introduce her to the senators—indeed, were Ted Kennedy on the committee, it might even be dangerous to the young lady to do so—because no normal heterosexual man defines himself as mainly or exclusively a sexual being, and all such men leave their sex lives in compartments separate from that of their business. The only people who do so define themselves, who do demand that their private sexual lives be stripped of all regulating norms and decorum and splashed about in public for all to goggle at, are those who have become so preoccupied by sex that they can think of themselves in no other dimension—in a word, those who are perverts. The proper place of sexuality (and other matters as well) in the normative codes of American society ought not to be too tough for all grown men and women to grasp, but it seems to be well over the heads of the Republican Party today.

It is not for nothing that John Stuart Mill called the conservatives of the 19th century "the Stupid Party." In one sense, this was a compliment, since a certain stupidity is at all times necessary for the continuation of civilized life. Human beings cannot reinvent the wheel every week, so they have to keep making wheels the way they were raised to make them, and the repetition of inherited ways of doing and thinking often resembles the behavior of stupid men. Conservatives are those who insist at all times on continuing the stupid but essential routines of civilized life, and usually that is sufficient to keep the wheels of civilization turning.

But sometimes it is not enough, and the failure of Republicans today to perceive that the major issue of American politics is whether we should try to make the machinery of human society turn by inventing new kinds of wheels for it shows that this is one of those times. The ideal response to Miss Achtenberg would have been to hoot her and her supporters out of public life entirely and to leave her, Mrs. Moseley-Braun, Mr. Riegle, and the whole repulsive pack of them in a public pillory for a few days where the mobs could work their will on them with rotten eggs, dead cats, and decaying fruit. If the Republican Party were doing its job, if it even knew what its job is, at least the political and rhetorical equivalent of such public mockery of perverts and their minions could take place, and the norms of public and private life would be protected. As it is, the Republicans are the ones who are pilloried for even daring to suggest that there are any good reasons why a sapphic sister shouldn't hold public office, and so weak, vapid, cowardly, and trivial has the resistance of the Stupid Party been to the cultural revolution that there is no good reason to say that the pillory is not where most of its members belong. c

LIBERAL ARTS



IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN KRAZY GLUE

The leader of the breakaway African-American Catholic Congregation celebrated Good Friday this year by organizing a burning and a mock burial of images portraying Jesus Christ as white. "Set yourself free," Bishop George Stallings of the Imani Temple told a predominantly black group of several hundred people at Freedom Plaza in Washington, D.C. "We have come to bury the white Christ. If you want to see what Jesus looked like go to a mirror."

Stallings burned a portrait of Jesus with long blond hair and light skin. Similar icons, including representations of Christ on the cross, were placed in a draped coffin. These are images that "oppressors" have pushed on blacks, Stallings lectured, adding that his followers should seal the coffin with Krazy Glue so that no one can "pry it open."

On Easter Sunday, Stallings presided over the unveiling at the Imani Temple of a portrait showing Jesus as a black man. His purpose in all this? To correct the "misinformation" that Christ had Aryan features and a European background. "People say that's being racist," he said. "But they want to control you. . . . Reclaiming the true Jesus is searching for the truth."

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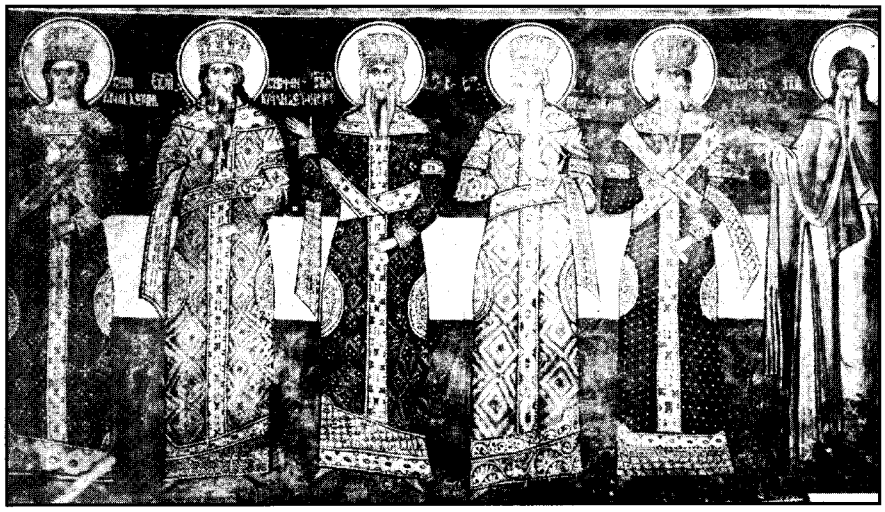

The Church of the Apostles, *Six Serbian Rulers*, 1633

Ghosts in the Graveyard

The Serbian Question, Again

by Thomas Fleming

The bus from Budapest to Belgrade is full, and I am lucky to get a seat. We are a cosmopolitan lot. In addition to the two Americans (I am traveling with Bill Mills, or "*Brat* [brother] Bill" as he will come to be known), there are two Norwegian businessmen sitting across the aisle reading the *Economist*, a sprinkling of Hungarians and Germans, and a group of friends returning to Belgrade from a vacation in the Orient. When we successfully clear Hungarian and Yugoslav customs, the friends begin dancing and singing as if the bus were a gypsy wedding. "What's the occasion?" I ask. "Oh, nothing," says one of them and bursts into hysterical laughter.

Contrary to my expectation of surly Yugoslav officialdom, the Serbian immigration agents are easygoing and friendly to the Americans. In fact, the whole project so far has been remarkably easy. In Milan I received a visa after only an hour's wait. I was even met at the Budapest airport by an embassy representative. When I tried to thank him for his attention, he told me that these days his job consists of helping journalists. He did not have to tell me that they were the very journalists who were calling for air strikes against his country.

What they expect out of me, I do not know. A dupe, perhaps, a secret sympathizer, maybe even a muddleheaded pacifist. In the old days, Yugoslavia had been the darling of American and European leftists, and the Serbs still cannot understand why they have become the enemy of the human race. No one in Europe has a good word to say for them. Over and over in the previous weeks my Italian friends had been asking me why I wanted to go to Serbia. Hadn't I read what my government had been saying about them? Didn't I believe what I had seen "with my own eyes" on the evening news?

I am suspicious of unanimity, especially one that is manufactured by the official press. I knew that in the limited time I had it was impossible to grasp the complexity of the conflicts, and since everyone else was reporting only the versions given by the Croats and Muslims, my small contribution would be to tell the story as the Serbs tell it and to learn to see the country through their eyes. I would be as honest and accurate as I know how, but objective? True objectivity requires the capacity to compare perspectives, and I had seen no evidence of objectivity in any of the press coverage of Yugoslavia. Some day, God willing, I might learn to appreciate the other sides of the story; for now it was enough to work my way into the skin of the Serbs.

The task is easier than it might be, since ordinary people speak their minds without hesitation. Waiting in line for the bus, I struck up a conversation with a former pilot who warned me not to believe what I was hearing from the embassy representative. "We'll talk later," he said, sensing the growing annoyance of the official. The pilot is anything but a Serb nationalist; in fact, he is not even a Serb but some kind of Yugoslav. With a Montenegrin father and a Croatian mother, he is married to a Croat who prefers to call herself Dalmatian. They and their children live in the same house in Belgrade with his sister and her Muslim husband. No, there is no trouble from Serbs. In fact, Belgrade is swarming with Croatian and Bosnian Muslim inhabitants, many of them refugees from war zones.

The pilot blames the politicians who now run all the new republics, including both Miloshevitch of Serbia and Tudjman of Croatia. Although they were all communists, he points out, that charge is only made against Miloshevitch (the only proper way to spell it in Latin letters without using diacritical

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marks. "Milosevic" is a monstrosity created by the monoglots at the *New York Times*). But, in a country where all the sides have enough guilt to go around, why is the Western press singling out the Serbs for blame? "Ask my wife if she wants to move to Croatia, and she'll tell you things to curl your hair. At least in Belgrade, there are opposition parties and a free press. In Croatia, there is neither. My brother lives in Zagreb, and I've been unable to speak with him for months. I am safe in Belgrade, but I'm worried about him." He points to the front of the bus, where a well-dressed but tragic-looking lady is sitting: "That is Neda Ukraden, the famous singer. She spent her life in Croatia, and now they have expelled her, simply because she is of a Serb background. That would not happen in Belgrade."

Belgrade

Some cities show the scars of previous conflicts, but Belgrade seems like one great scar. In their sieges, assaults, and bombardments, Turks, Austrians, Germans, and Americans have done their best to obliterate all vestiges of the past. The best buildings date from the last century, and despite the dirt and neglect they convey some impression of how pleasant the Serbian capital must have been in the last days of the monarchy, but everywhere throughout Old Belgrade run the ugly weals and abscesses of socialist buildings that swelled up to replace the rubble of the Second World War.

Belgrade does not seem like a city on the brink of war. Despite the embargo, the shops are full, and the cafes and restaurants are doing a good business. The only shortage is gas, but there is a bright side to that, too. In the old days, the streets were congested with traffic and the air heavy with smog. Now, the traffic is light and you can smell the spring flowers.

The most serious shortage is medicine. I speak to a teacher whose husband is chief of pediatric surgery at a major hospital. He has little to do these days, because without antibiotics and anesthetics he is afraid to operate. I hear the same story everywhere, from doctors, from soldiers, from street vendors. Why don't they let us get medicine? By "they," they mean us, the United States, NATO, the United Nations. It is not as if the Serbs are preventing medical aid from reaching their enemies. On the contrary, throughout the war, much of the relief aid has been routed through Serbia.

But none of this—the Croat refugees in Serbia, the medical shortages, the political liberties in Belgrade—is being reported. It is as if Yugoslavia did not exist until last year, so profound is the ignorance of the Western press. A decade ago, American journalists interested in the Balkans could have recited the heroic saga of Serbian resistance to the Nazis and their Croat/Muslim allies. Today, however, no one seems to remember the death camps in which hundreds of thousands of Serbs and Jews were butchered like so much cattle. Perhaps the figures were inflated, the photographs doctored, the atrocity stories invented. Harder to explain away are the reports filed by German and Italian officials, horrified by their allies' savagery. The Western press corps seems to know very little of this or, indeed, of any of the historical dimensions of the conflicts.

I begin to understand why only when I attend a press conference. The questions are bad enough—uninformed and trivial, but the answers given by the German U.N. general and the British UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) are even less to the point. In some cases, the young translator is botching the questions and answers; more often, the officials simply duck the questions. The German is particularly amusing to the Serbs, as he repeatedly refers to the then president of Yugoslavia, Dobrica Chositch, as Mr. Sausage. Since Chositch is among the best-known Yugoslav novelists of our time, the general's ignorance is not so much droll as tragic.

I notice that the average age of the reporters seems to be 25, and a worse set of foul balls, geeks, and nerds I have never seen. I ask a Serb journalist if it is the custom for the Western press to send only its youngest and least-talented stringers to Belgrade. He says no. There used to be a set of veterans, but once the war started, they began to be replaced by the children I had observed. Like most Slavs, he senses a plot. "Why did they replace General McKenzie as soon as he began saying that all sides were equally guilty? And, just when he is beginning to get the picture, General Morillon is being recalled."

To begin to understand the Serbs, a journalist should leave the press center and walk down to Kalamegdan, the old citadel that is now a park. Although most of what can be seen today of the fortress is of Austro-Hungarian construction, you can find buildings or at least fragments from every period: of communism, the Serbian monarchies, the Turks. There is even a Roman wall to commemorate Singidunum, the Romano-Celtic town that lies under the modern city. Lined up around the inner walls are tanks and field pieces captured in the past hundred years of war.

Inside Kalemegdan is a remarkable museum that brings to life the national history and the national myths of the Serbs. Walking past the exhibits, the visitor sees a military procession of warriors—Celts, Romans, Byzantines, Slavs, Turks, Hungarians, Germans, as well as every type of Serbian soldier—a time-lapse photography of ethnic struggles blooming into war and carnage in every generation.

For each exhibit, it seems, there is a tale of reckless courage and suicidal revenge: here is Milosh Obilitch, the Serb who assassinated Sultan Murad after (or during) the Battle of Kosovo; there is the Serb commander who held out as long as he could, until, finally letting the Turks into his fort, he fired the powder magazine, killing both armies. In revenge the Turks built their famous wall of Serbian skulls.

The violence in the Serbs' heroic tales is neither random nor offensive. The heroes are frontiersmen who tried to hold the line against invading Islam. Even today, Serb poets see their country as the last outpost of Christendom against the East. Blazho Perovitch's poem "*Serbijica Evropi na dushu*" ("Little Serbia on the Conscience of Europe") asks: "O clever young lady, do you know who was the first to defend Constantinople and Budapest and eternal Rome?"

The Serbian point of view has required a certain revisionism in the case of their greatest hero, Marko Kraljevitch, who was actually a Turkish vassal. Like most Serbs, Marko Kraljevitch did not enjoy the privilege of unequivocal loyalty, defending an independent people. To an American, indeed to most Europeans, these are only stories. But if even educated and conservative Americans can no longer remember, much less resent, Pearl Harbor and the Alamo, the average Serb—blind as he may be to the realities of the modern world—has never climbed out of the swirling torrents of history to take a good objective look at himself.

Leaving Kalemegdan, I walk down Ulica Kneza Mihajla (Prince Michael Street). Everywhere there are street vendors

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selling souvenirs, and I stop to buy Chetnik caps for my sons. Neither my Serbian nor the vendor's English are up to the transaction, but one of his friends who had lived in Australia tells me that the vendor is from Kosovo. "Albanian?" I ask. "Oh no, a Serb, and though he is my friend, I am afraid he is a bit of a Serbian racist." The vendor smiles and shows me his documents written partly in Albanian. I play dumb and ask "*Jeste li Shiptar?*" (Are you Shiptar, i.e., Albanian?) He snorts angrily and explains that he and his family were driven out of their village by the Shiptars.

Kosovo-Metohia

Upon our arrival in Prishtina, we are whisked away to the Grand Hotel—recently refurbished after years of neglect and misuse under the Albanian-controlled government, we are told—and then to a literary club for a late dinner, prefaced by *rakija* and accompanied by bottle after bottle of local wine. I am beginning to fear the recurrence of esophageal spasms. Three musicians (professional men in the daylight hours) go from table to table playing Serbian songs. The writers at my table request "*Ko to kazhe Srbija je mala?*" a nationalist song that asks the defiant question: "Who says Serbia is a small country?" These are literary intellectuals who, if they were Americans, would be condemning the racism of George Washington, but most Serb writers are fervent nationalists of a type that disappeared from the West over a century ago.

Photographs by William Mills

In front of Visoki Dechani: (r-l) William Mills, the Director of Monuments, the Prior, Thomas Fleming, Momcilo Selic (back), Slobodan Kostitch, the two drivers.

It is only later that I realize why we must eat in a club: Serbs are not welcome in Albanian restaurants. The next day, we must drive miles out of our way to eat in a mountain resort run by Serbs. We feasted on mountain lamb and jugs of wine given to us by a wine-maker who showed us the 14th-century casks that once had held the wine of Czar Stepan Dushan. A group of young men begin to sing patriotic songs, but my Serb friends are unimpressed. "Look at them boasting, and you can tell none of them has been at the front." Being at the front, for a Serb intellectual, is something like killing a lion for a young Masai. "We call this sort of patriotic display 'Serbianizing.'" There are worse vices to associate with a nationality.

Despite the fact that Serbs are an ever-dwindling minority in the region, Kosovo-Metohia—Old Serbia, as it is sometimes called—is the heartland of Serb nationalism. Everywhere there are relics and memorials of the medieval kings of the Nemanya dynasty, but no site in the world is more sacred to Serbs than the battlefield of Kosovo, where an indecisive battle with the forces of Sultan Murad spelled the downfall of the Serbian nation. According to one of the most beautiful of their folk poems, the Serb commander, Prince Lazar, was given the choice between a military and a spiritual victory: win the battle and lose the soul of the people or die and secure the kingdom of heaven.

This is more than historical revisionism, more than a convenient rationalization of defeat. It is the essence of the Serbian mind to find spiritual victory in defeat and desolation, dignity in subjugation, eternal life in death, and throughout the centuries of Turkish rule the Serbian identity was made up of loyalty to the Orthodox Church and celebration of Vidovdan, the day of St. Vitus, on which they lost their liberties at Kosovo.

In the cold light of dawn, Prishtina is almost frightfully ugly. There is an old part, but under Tito Prishtina swelled from a sleepy Middle Eastern town into a regional center for the socialist welfare system that helps to keep the Albanians idle and resentful. I am not well-acquainted with Third World countries, so the place reminds me of Mexico: hideous modern buildings falling into ruin, filth everywhere, and crowds on the street that stare at you as if you were a bugeyed Martian come to harvest their babies.

At first I am skeptical of all the anti-Albanian propaganda I hear from the Serbs. If a door handle is missing, they blame it on the Albanians; the missing grating that allows a clumsy American to fall into a 16-inch deep gutter—Albanians took it. Of course there is poverty and inefficiency all over Serbia, and hideous socialist buildings everywhere, but outside of an American housing project I have never seen such massive and stupid vandalism as in Kosovo. Anything that can be pried loose, it seems, will be stolen or broken. Some Serbs, I am told, have taken to carrying around their own door handle.

The university library is an oasis of order. On the outside, the building is among the most ludicrous I've ever seen. It was designed for Kuwait, someone tells me (jokingly?), but even the Kuwaitis had better sense. The mosquoid building, at first glance, seems constructed out of steel doormats and plastic trash bags, but inside all is clean and well-ordered. I was told that, until recently, most of the books written in any language but Albanian had been lying in heaps, unshelved and uncatalogued.

The transformation was accomplished by the library's new director, Slobodan Kostitch, a poet and man-of-letters who knows how to hack his way through wrought-iron cobwebs of Yugoslav bureaucracy. His office is filled with icons and reproductions of ancient Serbian art. My first impression is of an

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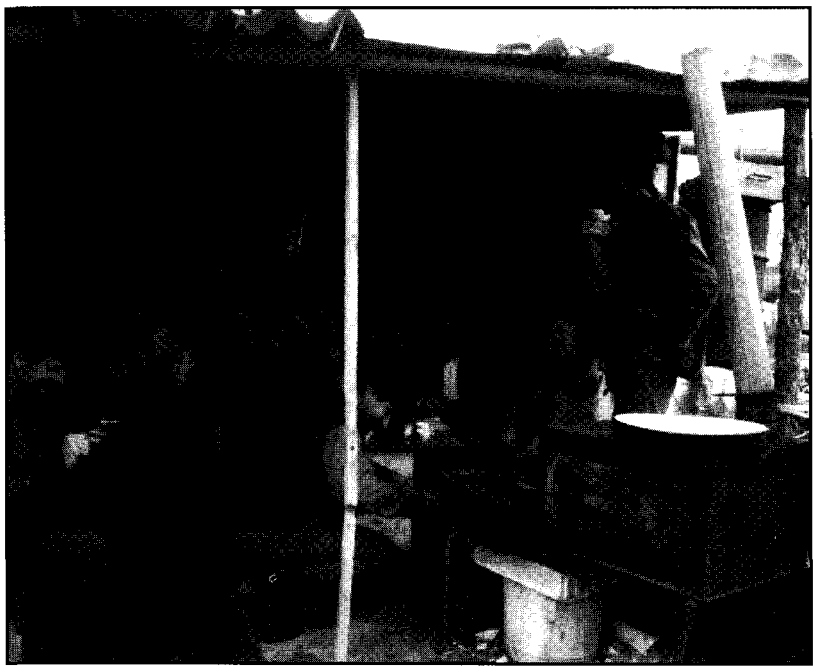
antiquarian devoted to the national past, but when after a two-hour drive we enter the monastery of Patriarsha—headquarters of the Serbian Orthodox Church—it becomes clear that in rediscovering their cultural roots, Serbs like Mr. Kostitch are also rediscovering their faith. Like him they carry Kosovo "like a wrinkle on the forehead."

The region of Metohia takes its name from a Greek Orthodox word for church property. It is an appropriate name, since the hills and valleys of Metohia are studded with the brilliant gems of medieval churches and monasteries. We are only able to visit three monasteries, Patriarsha, Visoki Dechani, and Grachanitsa. My interest was primarily antiquarian, not aesthetic. I had just spent three weeks in Italy—in Parma, Monza, Milan, Pisa, and Rome. What had Serbia to offer at that? I had been impressed by the pictures of what I thought were Byzantine frescoes in the Serbian churches, but books (even the superb volume put out by Jaca Books of Milan) had not prepared me for these days in Kosovo.



Mills and Fleming drinking coffee on the rocky plateau above the Neretva River.

Patriarshia is located outside of Petch, in a range of foothills looking up to the *Prokletije Planine*—the "Damned Mountains" that lead into Albania. Sheep are grazing in a green meadow that slopes down to a clear mountain brook. The place is very quiet, and the beauty of the scene is the right introduction to the church, which might have sprouted from the very stone of the mountains, and the frescoes inside are painted with the colors of the heavens, blue and gold. This is not art, as I have known art, but an epiphany of the world as seen through the eyes of Serbian Orthodox mystics, and to say much more would lead us from this painted paradise into the purgatory of art history and the hell of criticism.

High Dechani is a more classic construction, and Grachanitsa is almost dizzying in the off-centered beauty of its cupolas, but I am as impressed with the entire scene of Patriarsha as I am with anything I have ever witnessed. The prioress gives us a greeting, full of high and ancient courtesy, and we drink a glass of her plum brandy, which seems distilled out of the flowers as well as the fruit of the plum, so clean and pure a drink is it. The lady smiles, and the sun gleams off her gold teeth, radiant as the halo in an icon.

As we leave, I am shown the building that Albanians assaulted and tried to burn down ten years earlier. I have already noted the external frescoes of the church, which generations of Muslims have done their best to efface, but every church we visit has a story to tell, and some have already shipped off their most historic icons to Belgrade, in anticipation of more determined assaults. Everywhere, it is the face, particularly the eyes, that are scratched out, because the Muslims regard such depictions as blasphemous. The most famous case is the painting (in Grachanitsa) of Queen Simonida, the Byzantine princess who at the age of six became the fourth wife of King Milutin.

The gentle and learned nun who gives us a tour of Grachanitsa points out the mutilated painting and quotes the verses of Milan Rakitch, the Serbian consul to Turkish-held Prishtina who mourned the eyes that "some Albanian gouged out." Rather than use the occasion for a sermon against Muslim atrocities, the Serb poet finds beauty in desolation, as Prince Lazar built a spiritual kingdom in his death and defeat at Kosovo:

> Like stars burned out that still
> send human kind their light;
> and we see the splendor, the form and color,
> of distant stars that are no longer there.

Brian Hall (*New York Times Magazine*, 9 May 1993) repeats the Albanian explanation that it was really the Serbs, believing in the curative power of the plaster, who defaced their own churches. Hall is just clever enough not to endorse such nonsense; he merely reports it in the course of a one-sided narrative that manages to leave out nearly every relevant fact of Kosovo's history.

In the Middle Ages, Kosovo-Metohia lay at the center of Serbia, and even by the end of the 17th century the territory was no more than 5 percent Albanian, but in the 18th century, after defeating the Austrians, the Turks were able to push out a large part of the Orthodox population and to begin restocking Kosovo with Albanians. But even by the end of World War I, the Albanians amounted to no more than 60 percent.

As an underclass, first in the majority then in the minority, Kosovo Serbs enjoyed few protections. The Turks relied heavily on Albanian chieftains, whom they could scarcely control, and even reforming sultans at the end of the century were unable to restrain the Albanians in their relentless persecution of Christian "inferiors." French, German, and Russian visitors all commented on the savagery and lawlessness of the Muslim Albanian master class that refused to consider it a crime to murder Christian Serbs, and one Serb writer has recently compared the role of the Albanians with that of the Kurds employed by the Turks as their shock troops in the Armenian genocide.

All that is ancient history, but in World War II many Albanian Muslims leaped at the chance to return to ancient ways.

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Some joined the 21st S.S. *Scanderbeg* division; others were active in the *Balli Kombetar*, whose goal was to purge the region of Serbs; others simply settled private scores—the Albanians are universally famous for their blood feuds.

In Kosovo, the 45-plus years of communist rule had two phases: the first, down to 1966, during which Tito's government attempted to centralize the authority of the regime by balancing the ethnic interests of Serbs and Albanians. Some effort was made to suppress Albanian nationalist movements that received a steady stream of support from Tirana, but nationalist Serbs, entirely loyal to the Belgrade government, were

The new section of the Nevesinje graveyard. Burials since the troubles began occupy almost a third of the site.

subjected to the same harassment.

After 1966, the situation changed, and the entire region was handed over to the Albanian majority. Tito's primary object appears to have been to foster the ethnic antagonisms that made his personal rule an absolute necessity. During the next 25 years, the Albanians did everything they could to persuade the Serbs to leave. The university at Prishtina was turned into an Albanians-only enclave; place names were changed—even the name of the region. The Albanians disliked "Metohia," because it bears witness to the ancient and continued presence of the Orthodox Church; Serb villages were infiltrated by Albanians who intimidated and terrorized their Christian neighbors.

The result of this campaign was a steady exodus of Serbs, until Slobodan Miloshevitch broke with party orthodoxy and began encouraging the Serbs of Kosovo-Metohia to stay and fight. I visited a ruined church overlooking one of the villages where the resistance began, and after spending a few moments on the streets of Petch, I became convinced that the Serbian tales of oppression are not all propaganda. Getting out of the car, I began walking toward the bazaar, when several muscular Albanians walked up to me to make it plain I did not belong. They did not know who or what I was, except that I was not Albanian. One of them stuck his face into mine and glared. Anywhere else, I might have pushed his face in. Here, it might have meant our lives.

As a young man, I used to frequent rough places and have been in black-only bars at two o'clock in the morning and told to get my white a-- out if I knew what was good for me; as an adult I have been jeered by feminists, slandered by conservatives, and mugged by blacks and gypsies: I have talked to communists and Klansmen, white racists and black racists and Jewish racists, but I never knew what real hatred was until I ran into the Albanians. I only wish that Senator Dole, when he visited Kosovo, instead of taking the Potemkin village tour offered by Albanian separatists, had actually gone out on the streets and experienced the two groups at first hand. But—so the Serbs claim—when they offered to meet with him, his staff refused. The senator only wanted to hear one side of the story.

The Kosovo problem can never be resolved on the principle of majority rule. Such a solution is as impractical as it is unjust—impractical, because the Serbs will never abandon the center of their ancient kingdom, their greatest churches, and the battleground and scene of the "Kosovo Oath" that gives what little cohesion there is to the Serbian national identity; unjust, because the Albanian preponderance in population is partly the result of oppression and genocide. President Clinton has considered sending troops to Macedonia, and it has been suggested that this army could be sent into Kosovo to control disturbances, in other words, to guarantee the Albanians their right to continue their campaign of cleansing the region of Serbs.

A Macedonian adventure would virtually guarantee the outbreak of a Balkans War involving Bulgaria, Albania, and even Greece, as well as Serbia. It will be very bloody, whatever some Serbs may pretend to think of the Albanians. One retired policeman told me how he and his partner had held back hundreds of rioting Albanians and concluded, "I'm not worried about those guys; they're chicken." Later, in private, a Serb nationalist dismissed this as boasting—mere "Serbianizing": "Whatever else they are, the Shiptar are not cowards." Citing a piece of proverbial lore, he explained: "They are men (i.e., tough, heroic) but they are not humane. A good Serb is supposed to be both. We are not, always, but with them humanity is not even an ideal."

The Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina

Back in Belgrade there are gypsy bands playing on every street their wild incompetent music. Only a gypsy would attempt jazz improvisations on a battered tuba. What is this all about, I ask, some kind of feast day? A Serb friend laughs, and says it's always like this when something is about to happen. The cops go out and roust the gypsies and tell them to play—they think it is reassuring. Miloshevitch must be selling out the Bosnians.

As bad a press as the Serbs in general have received, it is nothing compared to the treatment given to the Bosnian Serbs. I had no opportunity to investigate the atrocity stories of massacres and rape hotels. When I asked various Serbian journalists and officials about them, they admitted that terrible things had been done by all sides—Muslims, Croats, *and* Serbs—but, they added, the Muslims had practiced systematic rape in Bosnia more than a year before the first charges were raised against the Serbs. Why hadn't the Western press reported the earlier stories?

I asked if there were films of the Serbian victims. There were, and they would show them to me if I wanted, but most of the women would not appear on camera, and of those who did most would not allow their names to be used and insisted upon sitting with their backs to the camera. They feel too

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deeply ashamed. I asked if anyone had tried to persuade them to be more forthcoming—after all, such evidence might help to prevent air strikes. "We Serbs do not exploit our women." It is always the same answer, whether the question has to do with raped women or victims of massacres. Local villagers would not allow anyone to photograph the remains of their massacred relatives. "We do not exploit our dead." Hill & Knowlton would have a hard time handling this account.

I make the trip with Misho Vujovitch, a Montenegrin journalist who can recite the atrocities committed by Muslims going back to the 14th century, and like most Serbs he can tell you exactly where the bodies are buried. "For 500 years they butchered us, and then during the last war they and the Croats joined the S.S. and committed atrocities that even scared the Germans. Now, the Americans and the Germans think they can make us live under the rule of our butchers, after all that has been done and all they are doing now?"

Misho is a mystic as well as a nationalist. "We are God's people," he declares, and as evidence of divine judgment, he points out that the Turkish president has died; Genscher is out of office; the Austrian president is half-paralyzed. Like many Serbs, he sees his nation's history as the unfolding of a divine plan in which events of five or six hundred years ago are fulfilling themselves only today. He quotes a poem he has written, of which I can only remember the first line: "The ghosts are coming alive in the graveyard."

If the Serbs are God's people, then their enemies must belong to the devil, and, in general, Misho has no high opinion of foreigners. When journalists ask him questions, he sometimes responds with a tall tale, like the one about the Muslim selling foreskins as oysters in Srebenica. Asked what paper he works for, he likes to answer *Chetnik Times*.

Our destination is Nevesinje, and the train takes us through Montenegro—brilliant blue water spilling out of gorges, the most beautiful trout water I have ever seen. There are even fish, and not 50 miles from the war zone I see families camped beside the river and fishermen lazily working their long and deadly poles along the banks. We arrive in Podgorica, which used to be Titograd, which used to be Podgorica, and wait for a driver. We all succeed in losing each other for over an hour, but when we finally assemble, our driver proves to be a 6'6" Herzegovinian youth, too handsome to be in the movies.

Boro, who has seen things that make him sick inside, things that make him wonder if he can ever have a normal life, is only a kid who likes to drive too fast and play the music too loud. We talk him out of the Sarajevo pop he has on tape—I dare not tell him it sounds Arabic—and he switches to a sort of Chetnik Top 40, including songs of the current war, variations on the most ancient themes. "*Ko to kazhe, ko to lazhe Srbija je mala?*" plays over and over in our two-hour steeplechase through the dark hills of Herzegovina.

We arrive late, but Colonel Gushitch, the local commander, is still up, attending to business. He gives us a detailed and lucid briefing on the events leading up to the war in Bosnia, and although the colonel had a distinguished career in the Yugoslav army, he has harsh words for communist rule. "A spiritual genocide inflicted by leaders who were all misfits and jailbirds." Most of the current crop of leaders in the breakaway republics he describes as misfits who ran afoul of Tito. Some were open traitors, like the (Croatian) last president of a unified Yugoslavia, who wrote a book, *How I Destroyed Yugoslavia*. This head of the Croatian parliament, he points out, became famous as a village mayor who was convicted not only of diverting funds from the restoration of an Orthodox church but even of hiring goons to beat up the *iguman* (prior).

Worse than the political treacheries, in the colonel's opinion, was the betrayal of the army by its Croatian and Slovene officers. He speaks with bitterness of the great Slovene victory over the army. "The truth is, our men would not fire on the Slovenes, and as we were retreating through Croatia, the Croats attacked us." Now he is here in his hometown, one of the few officers with his son, his only son, on active duty. His men are battle-ready, he says, not because of their equipment or training, but because "they have noble souls." What he means is that unlike the Muslims, the Serbs have no record of genocide, no history of imperialism. "They are fighting now, as they have always fought, to keep their own."

Though there is a certain contradiction in the Serb position—simultaneously cursing and defending the old union—it is hard not to rail against the hypocrisy of the American Republic that forced the South back into a union, with a slaughter that makes the Bosnian conflict look petty, and now complains about Serbian intransigence. "When are the English going to get out of Ireland?" a Herzegovinian soldier asks me, adding, "There will be time enough to listen to their sermons, when they do."

If Kosovo is a land of churches, Bosnia-Herzegovina has been a land of singers and poets. One of the greatest of Serb poets, Aleksa Shantitch, lived in Mostar most of his life, refusing to settle elsewhere. "*Ostajte Ovde* (stay here)," he tells himself, "this country is your mother. Take a look at the *karst* and the fields—everywhere are the graves of your ancestors. For this land they were giants, heroes who knew how to defend her. In this land you also stay and for her give your blood." Shantitch, who was a patriot without being a chauvinist, had kind words for Muslims and Croats. As a famous Serb, however, he was regarded as a demon, and his grave has been desecrated, apparently by Croats.

According to some accounts, another writer, Ivo Andritch (Nobel Prize, 1961), may have inspired the most famous terrorist incident of the Bosnian conflict. A deranged Muslim terrorist, Murad Shabanovitch, who opened the floodgates of the Vishegrad power station, hoped to drown the Serbs—although the first result was to destroy his own house and village. According to Misho, some Muslims justify Shabanovitch, saying that the Satan Ivo Andritch had haunted the unfortunate Murad until Allah appeared in a dream and told him to return Ivo Andritch to the River Drina. The unfortunate Murad is now a general in the Bosnian army.

Everywhere I hear and read the familiar stories, of churches leveled, Serb villages massacred, and women violated. How to evaluate them? What frustrates the Bosnian Serbs is that this has all happened before, when the Ustashi and Muslims set up their death camps in the 1940's. Now the Croatian president says it never happened, but it did then and it is going on today.

It was in Nevesinje that the uprising against the Turks began in 1875, and here that the revolt against the Ustashi began in 1941. The colonel's own father was killed on Vidovdan, the second day of the uprising, and the people have not changed in 50 years. Colonel Gushitch tells me that the Serbs of Bosnia and the Kraina are the toughest, partly because they have been oppressed the most, and cites a saying of a 19th-century Croatian nationalist: "The snake must be struck in the head," that is in Bosnia and the Kraina, because the men are willing

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to fight to the last man, resisting alien oppression.

We stay up till four o'clock, talking with the colonel and eating his Spam. He awakens us at six-thirty to take us on a tour of his positions. It is rough land, *karst* with a stubble of grass sprouting between the outcroppings of limestone, ground fit only for pasturing sheep, although it is said that the flesh of these sheep is the sweetest in the world.

We drive past Serb villages and churches devastated by enemy fire. Lurching onto a dirt track, better suited to goats than landrovers, we climb up to a barren plateau. Everywhere are the signs of war. Gutted shepherd's cottages, overturned vehicles, and every few kilometers a dugout or two. Many of them go back to one of the world wars or even to the Balkan Wars, and some have been refurbished for use in the latest verses of Serbian heroic songs.

We drive into a command post with the sign "Hunting Lodge." Soldiers' humor. They call their dugouts *vikendice* (weekend cottages). As we come in one of the men in our vehicle shouts, "What are you doing?" and one soldier answers, "What do you think? Fishing!" I observe that many of them are not carrying weapons, and the answer comes back, "We'll fight them with rocks."

The units are small and dispersed all over this rocky plateau overlooking the Neretva River. "Look around," says one of the men, "What are you going to bomb here?" In truth, they are well dug into the rock and overhead are many feet of concrete.

Outside the Cafe Lasta: Col. Gushitch on his daily round of visits to the front.

I wonder, aloud, what air power alone could accomplish up here, where the slightest miscalculation in a high-level "surgical bombing" raid would wipe out the Croats and Muslims in Mostar, hardly more than a mile away, across the river. The colonel agrees: "All our lines are so zigzagged with each other, and they enclose so many civilians that an air war would be a slaughter without strategic results."

There is no way to protect civilians in this war. A soldier making coffee over an open fire insists that the Croats use Serb civilians to work on their fortifications when they are under fire. I wince as he picks up the hot iron kettle off the fire with his bare hands. As the coffee brews, he ladles the scum off into the cups, as Italians skim the foam off a cappuccino milk pitcher.

By now it must be after eight o'clock, and we drink our third round of "Serbian coffee" and the second ration of *rakija*. (One of our small gifts, along with cigarettes and newspapers, was a bottle of *shlivovitsa*.) Toasts and messages to America are the order of the day. "We are glad that you are here to see that this is a holy battle for our land and people," says a soldier back from a night at the very front. It had been relatively quiet, apart from frequent interchanges of rifle fire. "My comrades will never allow this holy land to be bargained away in talks." Another tells us, "Say hello to all the good Americans, but the bad Americans—" he draws his hand across his throat. But by far the most common message is, "We don't ask you to believe what we tell you. Just write what you see, and print the truth."

In my sport jacket and light walking shoes, I am not dressed for the battlefield. And as we clamber up a rocky hillside to the most forward position, one of our companions in a Montenegrin hat shouts something in English I do not understand. Stumbling over a trip-wire, I freeze. He laughs—it is only an alarm, not a mine, although the wire would have been the same. The colonel tells me to watch my step around here. Spent cartridges and bits of shrapnel are everywhere. When we get to the top, there is a tremendous view of the Neretva, and down to the right is Mostar, not far at all. One of the soldiers shows me a dummy that has been set up to attract enemy fire, and later one of Misho's photographs of the scene will find its way to the Associated Press, unattributed of course. American journalists, he says, like to get photographs from the front without doing the work. They promise money and credit but rarely deliver. I explain it is nothing personal: this is the way most American newspapers and magazines work. It is a kind of applied Marxism, from those according to their ability to those according to their need.

We enter a beautifully appointed dugout—the sign says Cafe Lasta (Cafe Swallow)—and eat lamb prosciutto the soldiers have made, and drink more coffee and *rakija*. It is late spring, and their vegetable garden already has a crop of salad greens. Like their fathers and grandfathers and all their ancestors before them, these men know how to live off this spare land in the mountains. They do not expect freeze-dried meals and regular rotation for R&R. It is bean soup (we see them eating later at headquarters), smoke-dried lamb, vegetables they have grown, and coffee. If we do go in and butcher them, I only hope that we will recognize, as Prince Marko did when he killed an enemy, "Woe is me, for I have killed the better man."

These are not the savage Chetniks I was half-hoping to meet. All the men around the table come from the same village. Their families have been murdered, their houses and churches destroyed. Where do they have to go? What do they have to lose? There is no swagger about them, and when their colonel praises them for constructing and keeping so fine a bunker, one of them answers: "Good soldiers only mean a good commander." It is clear, everywhere we go, that Gushitch is loved and respected by all his men. Despite his regular army background, he treats the men like younger brothers, embracing more often than saluting them. He tells me, "Men like these cannot be ordered around like conscripts. If you treat them with respect, they will die for you."

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Upon the walls of Cafe Lasta are photographs of wives and children and aged parents, and the largest picture is of a fighter they had known. These are their pin-ups. In my admittedly brief time in Nevesinje and at the front, I never saw a single piece of pornography of even the mildest description. These are family men, and I could more easily believe the stories of rape hotels if they were told of our troops than of these men—so chaste, as old-fashioned Serbs are, to the point of puritanism.

At the next camp, the talk is all of hardware. These men have several tanks as well as heavy artillery. I do not ask where they got them, since it is not a secret that the Bosnians have been reinforced and supplied by the Yugoslav army. The other side has friends too, and I am shown captured automatic weapons made in East Germany and Russia as well as processed food products made in America and supplied by NATO, so they insist, and not the U.N. I point out that the chicken dinner was packed in South Carolina, and they thank me for my people's unintended generosity.

The men have just heard the news that the Belgrade government is insisting upon the Vance-Owen plan. I ask Colonel Gushitch what he and his men will do, if Mr. Miloshevitch decides to cut off aid and seals the border. "If we run out of gas and supplies, we'll take them from our enemies." "That," he says somewhat ominously, "will start the dance." Badgered by questions, the colonel remains silent for a moment, before telling the men that if the U.N. forces make any attempt to drive them out, they will cross the river into Muslim territory.

Overhead we hear the distant rumble of U.N. planes. One soldier hearing the planes shouts, "When will it start? We're ready." I ask how low they fly, and an officer tells me, "Five hundred meters. If they come in any lower, we'll shoot them down."

On our way back along an exposed ridge, I hear a series of big firecrackers going off behind the car, and from the rear window I see little bursts of flame. We are being fired upon by 20 m.m. antiaircraft guns from three positions across the river. They aim high, apparently, and the shells drop onto the target. In this case, they have spotted the colonel's car, but they do not even come close. Gushitch laughs, and says we'll give them a little something to think about when we get to headquarters. In a few minutes, he is ordering an artillery barrage somewhat more substantial than the enemy gave him. I feel sure there is a U.N. record somewhere declaring, "Serbs break truce in Nevesinje."

Back in Nevesinje the town is crowded with soldiers and refugees from across the river. Most are in good humor and good order, although I have heard that some Serbs arrived in bad shape. I ask to be taken to a hospital, and speak with a soldier whose leg was blown off by a landmine. Ordinarily, he says, the idea is to take your foot off, which means that three men leave the field—the wounded man and two others to carry him, but the Muslims like to double the charges.

I speak at length with an old woman from near Konjits, a village where the Serbs had been terrorized and massacred in World War II. All the old atrocities were being repeated. Her husband, along with most of the other Serbian men, had been captured and murdered. He was a big man, if old, and they had beaten him within an inch of his life, then bayoneted him in the throat and crushed his head with a rifle butt. The Muslims had put her and the other women in a schoolhouse. No, she had not been tortured, and once they were confined, she had witnessed no sexual assault against the women.

She had even been allowed to visit her son in prison, and the Muslim guard had given her coffee. Things were changing, though. In July 1992, the Croats and Muslims started fighting among themselves and spread the word that it was the Serbs who were attacking. Muslims started shooting into the POW camp, and then set fire to it, shouting "Do you want to be shot or burnt?" More recently the Mujeheddin were coming in from the Arab world. Two black Muslims from Africa had interrogated her to find out where her male relatives were and laughed about her son. "The big fellow, we know about him." She had not seen her son since, and she fears the worst.

Herzegovinian Serb fighters waiting outside the Cafe Lasta.

I had heard these tales of Muslim volunteers before, but my Serbian friends in Belgrade had put them down to propaganda, yet this lady was very scrupulous. When, to test her credibility, I repeatedly invited her to tell me atrocity stories of rape and torture, she told me she would only say what she had seen, not what she had heard, although she had heard many such stories. A Serb fighter had told me that he had seen the badges of these Mujeheddin: a black swan raping a white woman. Can this be true?

I could never be a journalist, squeezing stories out of decent people who have suffered terribly, and I do not wish to go on to the next room, where two Croatian soldiers are recovering from their wounds. Their story, however, is worth telling. They too had been in Konjits as allies of the Muslims. One night, without a warning, they said, the Muslims began killing the Croats. I ask why. "We hate each other. That is enough of a reason." The Croats resisted as long as they could, but they could never have held out, if the Serbs had not given them aid. Finally, the Croats had bargained their way into Serbian lines by bringing Serbian prisoners. Colonel Gushitch had already told me that some of the Croats had been conscripted, without much resistance, to defend Serb lines against Muslims. These

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men, however, were being sent back to their families.

I ask the soldiers why these peoples cannot live together in peace. "Maybe the Serbs and Croats could do it some day, but with the Muslims, never." Since many Serbs believe that it is the Catholic Church that has inspired the Croats with hatred, I ask them if their priests have ever stirred up resentment against Serbian Orthodoxy. This was a chance to ingratiate themselves with their captors, but they both denied it, vehemently.

The only solution, explains one of the Croats, would be to give part of Bosnia to Croatia, part to Serbia, and leave the center to the Muslims. Anyone who has looked at the Vance-Owen map realizes that it would have the opposite effect of continuing the "Bosnian experiment in multiculturalism," that is to say, it would prolong the slaughter.

Monza, Lombardia

This former bastion of the Holy Roman Empire is a beautiful town, unspoiled by tourism, but the clean, attractive streets seem too American, too domesticated after Serbia. There is music in the street, but it is a group of Peruvians playing their monotonously cheerful music. My friends tell me that I drank too much *shlivovitsa* with the Chetniks. They are probably right, or perhaps it was the wine of Czar Dushan. I went to see things from the Serbian perspective, and I succeeded all too well. I went from being a sympathetic if skeptical observer to being a partisan. I call it Stoic journalism—or even Zen journalism—you let what happens happen and find yourself sucked into a stream of events you could never have planned or anticipated.

As an America Firster or even, as Pat Buchanan jokingly called me, a Serbia Firster, would I recommend to Christian America that we go in and help the Christian Serbs? Absolutely not. Western Christendom has given the Serbs enough help to obliterate any other people: from the Vatican, which tried to convert the kings and whose persecution of the Bogomils in Bosnia helped drive them into the arms of Islam; from the Austrians, who rushed in to protect Bosnia, once the Serbs had expelled the Turks, and stayed to annex the region to their empire, a stupid and immoral decision that led directly to World War I; from the French and the Americans, who compelled the Serbs to abandon their dream of a unified Serbia and forced them to accept the mongrel state of Yugoslavia; from Churchill and the English, who abandoned the Christian patriot Drazha Mihajlovitch and installed Tito as communist dictator; and from George Bush and his advisors, who, up to the armpits in "fees" from Yugoslav clients, tried desperately to save the doomed federation, demonizing first the Croats for wanting to break away and then the Serbs for turning nationalist.

Col. Gushitch and one of his officers.

What, ultimately, is the interest of America and its NATO allies in Bosnia and Kosovo? Bill Clinton says it is to contain the conflict, but intervention is the surest way to widen it. Over and over the Serbs asked me why America hates them. I think they are right. I think our ruling class does hate them, because it sees in them what we used to be. It sees Achilles and brave Horatius, Robin Hood and Jesse James; real men who settle their own accounts, fight their own battles, sing their own songs, and worship their own God, and because we have learned to hate ourselves and all that we have been, we want to destroy these presumptuous braggarts who think they have the right to their own identity.

Yugoslavia was an ill-conceived project from the same brains that hatched the League of Nations, and as it breaks up, so does the whole international order jury-rigged at Versailles. Bosnia is a microcosm of the microcosm Yugoslavia. It is not a nation; it is only a multicultural experiment. Let them fight it out, once and for all, and establish defensible borders behind which they may learn in time to endure the sight of each other. The Croats and Serbs are not dogs and cats; they are two closely related breeds of dogs: too different to love each other, too close for respect. They can never forget what they have done to each other, and if I believe the Serbs have been the more injured party, I say it makes no difference anymore, once they are free of the imposed embrace that has made them mutually detestable. When each of the sides can have its own country, its own identity, its own religion, only then will there be peace.

This article could not have been written without the generous assistance of many Serbs, in and out of government, who wasted hours and days in trying to help a foreigner whose President keeps threatening to kill their people. I can only mention a few of them. In Belgrade: Boda Markovitch of Radio Belgrade, a real Atlas of a man; Vesna Ilitch of the Foreign Press Office; poet and editor Blazho Perovitch and Dragan Gachitch of the Ministry of Culture, who both helped to arrange the trip to Kosovo; and Chaslav Ocitch, who accompanied us to Kosovo. I cannot mention all the people who helped us in Prishtina, but I cannot fail to pay tribute to Slobodan Kostitch and the director of monuments. In Herzegovina, the journalist Misho Vujovitch, who traveled with us, was indispensable, and nothing could have been accomplished without the generous help of Colonel Gushitch and his men, especially our driver Boro, who has a career waiting for him in the States if he ever wants to race on the NASCAR circuit. My friend Bill Mills took the photographs and was a trooper throughout. The greatest thanks goes to Momo and Anna Selic, hosts, translators, tour guides, instructors in the language, history, and culture of Serbia, and—above all—friends.

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Larkinesque

by Tom Disch

Having so long been in the habit
Of not being Me,
I rather fancy
The prospect of returning as a rabbit—

A baby rabbit sold at Easter
For the infant joy
Of a baby boy,
Then allowed to starve and fester

In a shoebox grave, to be reborn
Again, and soon,
As the crescent moon,
Aloof above a world of porn,

Freed of the need to live and breathe,
The mere reflection
Of light's perfection
And source of the silvery Lethe.

On the Occasion of Passing My Old Address and Finding It Had Become a Punk Art Gallery

by Tom Disch

Is bad painting good painting?
So some maintain.

Is bad poetry, then, good poetry?
Perhaps.

And what of bad people?
They can be good at times.

And bad smells?
You get used to bad smells.

Can *anything* be bad
Without being, somehow, good?

Oui! cried the pig. Oui, oui, oui,
All the way home.

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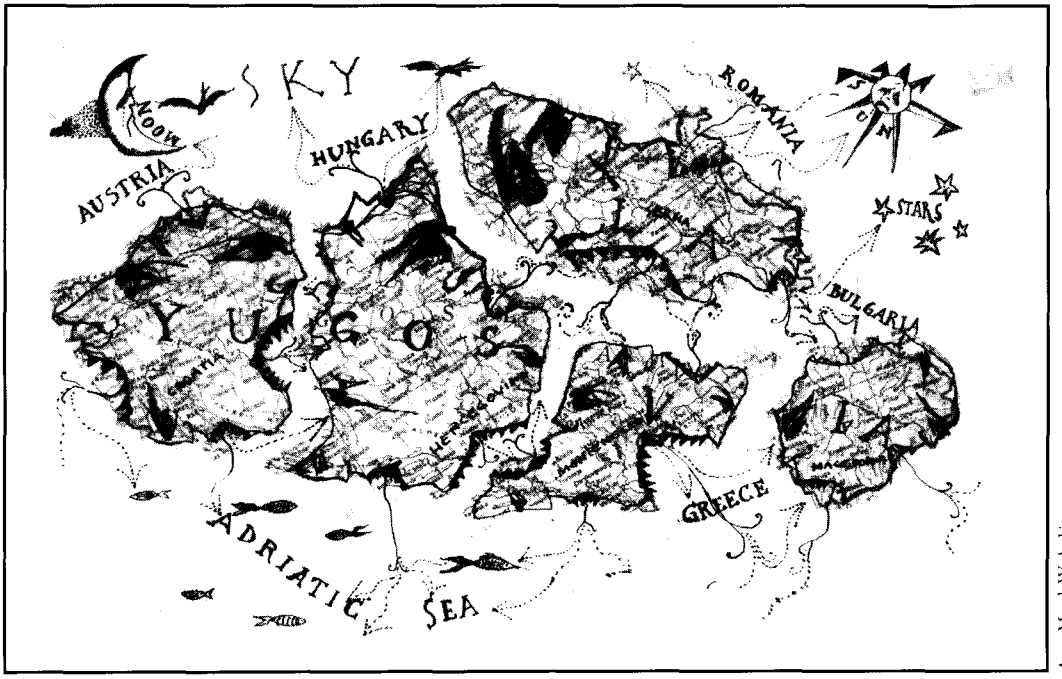
The Yugoslav Mythology

A Multicultural Pathology

by Tomislav Sunic



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

One must agree with Georges Sorel that political myths have a long and durable life. For 74 years the Yugoslav state drew its legitimacy from the spirit of Versailles and Yalta, as well as from the Serb-inspired pan-Slavic mythology. By carefully manipulating the history of their constituent peoples while glorifying their own, Yugoslav leaders managed to convince the world that Yugoslavia was a "model multiethnic state." Many global-minded pundits in the West followed suit and made a nice career preaching the virtues of the Yugoslav multiethnic pot. By tirelessly vaunting the Yugoslav model, scores of starry-eyed Western academics gave, both pedagogically and psychologically, additional legitimacy to artificial Yugoslavia. In 1991, faced with massive geopolitical tremors, stretching from Siberia to Spain, the Yugoslav mythology began cracking up, and with it, its multiethnic mystique. The sudden beginning of the democratization of Yugoslavia led, naturally, to the country's demise, the bloody postscript to which is yet to unfold.

Nothing seemed easier for the European Community and the United Nations than to describe the 1991 Serbian aggression against Croatia as a Serbo-Croat tribal war. At the beginning of the conflict, France, America, and a gallery of faceless U.N. mediators shrugged off Serbian territorial appetites by calling them the result of an ancient Serbo-Croat balkanesque feud. After all, why would big powers have to intervene in an area of Europe that, according to their definition of international law, offered no precise definition of the aggressor vs. the victim? The paralysis of the United Nations and European Community was seen by the Serbs as a green light to salvage Yugoslavia by force—even if that meant destroying it by force. As self-declared victims of hard times and soft former allies, the Serbs are today angry at France and America. These two countries once offered them Yugoslavia—only to strip them of it today.

In retrospect, the good guys appear to be those who define the international system, which in 1993, unlike in 1919 and 1945, does not well suit the Serbs. By detour, we could refer to Edward Carr's dictum that before we study history we must first study the historian—if we are to decide who to side with in the Balkans. Historically, the "Greater Serbia" mythology has functioned only by wallowing in victimology—even as Serbs victimized the Other. In the latest spasm of this endless victimology, Serbs are today heaping their anger for the collapse of Yugoslavia on everybody: the Vatican, Muslims, the CIA, the Fourth Reich, and, of course, always available nearby

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Croats.

All the rest seems to be distant history now. In 1990, on the eve of Yugoslavia's breakup, the majority of Catholic Slovenes and Croats favored the transformation of centralized Serb-dominated Yugoslavia into a confederal state. Serbian communist leader Slobodan Milosevic flatly refused the idea of a confederal Yugoslavia for fear that Serbia would lose its historic Yugoslav mandate, which it had received at Versailles in 1919 and inherited at Potsdam in 1945. When in 1991 Slovenes and Croats voted in defiance for a complete divorce from Yugoslavia, the Yugoslav Army launched a large-scale invasion against Slovenian and Croat "fascist separatists." As the war began to rage, so did the inflated word fascism become an expedient metaphor for the Western media. It was hurled by everybody at everybody—and it therefore hit nobody. The Serbs see themselves as fighting the just war against a resurgent fascist papal Croatia and Islamic fundamentalism. The Western media, by contrast, is portraying Serb President Slobodan Milosevic as the fascist butcher of the Balkans, bent on ethnic cleansing. Yet, old dogs cannot learn new tricks. Milosevic is still a communist *apparatchik*, and the party he presides over is still euphemistically called the Socialist Party of Serbia.

Unquestionably, the roots of the present conflict in what in the past tense used to be Yugoslavia are grounded in recent history, which by now has turned into self-serving mythology. During World War II, Serbia suffered under fascism but, like all European countries, also experimented with fascism. Serbia experienced its own share of killing and suffering just like Croatia, or, for that matter, any other country in Europe. World War II and postwar sufferings of Muslims, Albanians, ethnic Germans, and Hungarians at the hands of the Yugoslav communists still appear to evade the contemporary media comparisons. Serbia's less glorious World War II past was for years swept under the red carpet of oblivion, first by Yugoslav communist clerics and then by contemporary Serbian hagiographers.

The real warfare in Bosnia and Herzegovina has now ceased to be a war of Serb-Croat-Muslim memories; it has turned into a surreal war for respective numbers of casualties and endlessly increasing national trigonometries. Since 1945, Yugoslav politicians, the Serb Christian Orthodox Church, and a number of Serb intellectuals have steadily inflated Serbian World War II casualties, which portray Serbs as victims of inborn Croatian and German fascism. The president of Croatia, former Partisan general and historian Franjo Tudjman, is intensely hated in Serbia because his World War II body counts fly in the face of Serbian victimology. Before becoming president of Croatia, Tudjman tried to demolish Serbian and communist historiography by deflating the number of Serbian World War II dead from the official 700,000 to a very modest 70,000. Predictably, his excursion into historicism regarding Serbian mythical martyrdom unleashed Serbia's wrath. Faced with a sudden Croatian attack on her mythology, Serbia launched, in 1991, a military counterattack against separatist Croatia. Political reality may change, but mythical surreality must remain untainted by any profanity.

Tudjman's books and statements also led to an outcry among Western liberal opinion-makers, who were quick to dub him an anti-Semitic revisionist. The real problem with Tudjman is not so much his substance, but rather his awkward Central European *schwerfällig* style. Unlike the Serb Slobodan Milosevic, who is a slick Byzantine con man with an excellent knowledge of English and the ability to fool "prime-time" Westerners, the Croat Tudjman, just like all Central European politicians, stutters and mutters. Small wonder, therefore, that he could not quickly sell the Croatian cause to the videopolitical world of Washington and Paris.

To grasp Serbian anger at Croatia and the West one should read the 19th-century Serbian satirist Radoje Domanovic. Domanovic described the royal house in Serbia as the site of endless Byzantine persecution complexes coupled with pan-Slavic zeal to convert Catholic and Muslim Slavs. Serbian royal hallucinations, stretching from the House of Karadjordjevic all the way down to the House of Milosevic, are still visible in Belgrade today. Every Serb is made to believe that a conspiratorial West, along with an Islamic East, is plotting to enslave the Serb people. Croats, by contrast, see Bosnia's Muslims as stupid, neolithic, stray-away Croats who now need to be reconverted to Croatian national consciousness. In Croatian popular jokes, Bosnia's Muslims are endlessly portrayed as species with bizarre lovemaking conduct and strange toilet habits.

The more secular European Community and United Nations also border on mythical melodrama. Their vicarious humanism manifests itself in occasional drops of culinary diplomacy, as well as in the presence of "peace-keeping forces" in a country torn by violent war. U.N. Samaritans lecture against Serbian ethnic cleansing, forgetting that ethnic cleansing is only the postmodern spin-off of the *cujus regio ejus religio* of all countries in the making. Ethnic cleansing did not start with Milosevic and his likes; it began with communist Tito, who either killed or expelled a half-million ethnic Germans and Hungarians from early Yugoslavia. Tito only practiced in chorus the art of other East European communists, which resulted in the largest German *Völkerwanderung* in history: from the Balkans to the Baltics, from Königsberg to Karlovac. The Croatian exodus from Vukovar last year and the agony of Dubrovnik under Serbian bombs, followed today by death on the installment plan in Sarajevo, are only the continuation of the funeral march that began at Bleiburg and Breslau in 1945 . . . and that is finishing in Bosnia in 1993. Forty years after Tito's ethnic cleansing, Milosevic miscalculated: he grotesquely followed his predecessor's suit, and he grotesquely failed.

During its brief communist interregnum, Tito's Yugoslavia offered the foreign visitor bizarre features, which only the morbid and satirical painter, the 17th-century Jacques Callot, could have captured. In one of Callot's pictures, showing the Thirty Years War in Europe, one sees a scene of boundless popular revelry near a tree decorated with dozens of hanged men. Similarly, Titoist Yugoslavia could for years boast of the largest number of nudist beaches in Europe, but also of the largest prison population per capita in Eastern Europe. Just like in permissive Amsterdam, one could freely light up a joint in the center of Belgrade or Zagreb, but one could also easily end up, for a minor "political incorrectness," in a real communist joint. Yugoslav conviviality allowed everybody everything—provided one did not touch the infallibility of the mythical Tito. For 40 years, Yugoslav communist vocabulary dubbed every Croat a "fascist" if he ventured to evoke his national ancestry. In Yugoslavia, as everywhere else in Eastern Europe, one could display national sentiments and unfurl his flag only behind closed family doors or in the open soccer field.

A number of Serbians ended up in Tito's prisons too. Cut

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into three parts, Voivodina in the north, Kosovo in the south, and Serbia proper in the middle, Greater Serbia was a myth that Tito was well able to keep under his control. In turn, however, Tito rewarded the Serbs with leverage in the two most important nerves of the Yugoslav government: high diplomacy and the Yugoslav army.

The targets of Serb rage are not just the proverbial Croat Nazis and Muslim fundamentalists. All other neighboring nations, ethnic groups, and minorities are being put in the category of fascist world conspirators. Ironically, Croats and Serbs probably hate each other most because they resemble each other. Is it not true that racism is always directed at the Other, who psychologically and morphologically always represents the travesty of the Same? One does not discriminate against beasts; one discriminates against his likes. Following the logic of the cursed Other, a great number of Serbs, both in Serbia and Bosnia, are deeply convinced that ethnic cleansing is the rightful way to pursue a noble struggle against Croatian fascism and Muslim fundamentalism, for which all military means and tools are morally justifiable. The destruction of Croatian Catholic churches and Muslim mosques, the killing of thousands of non-Serbs, bears witness to the never-ending logic of the worse. Tomorrow, times may change and political constellations may alter. Who will prevent tomorrow's Albanians or nearby Hungarians from similar mythical aggrandizements and ethnic cleansing of Serbs? Permanent peace has never meant much in Europe; peace has always been seen by the Other as punitive. Alas, European laws of the tragic are timeless, and their meaning lies only in the bowels of wild geese, or in the rhymes of the Greek chorus . . .

The Serbian government does not deserve all the blame for the carnage in the Balkans. Western governments, particularly the United States and France, preached for decades the "unity and integrity" of Yugoslavia, as if Yugoslavia could be held together by some French decree or State Department *ukase*. The U.S. State Department (and especially its year-long chief *apparatchik* Lawrence Eagleburger), with its decades-long support of "Yugoslavia's integrity," gave a decent alibi to Serbia's war of aggression. Hybrid Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, two virulently anti-German countries, fit geopolitically into the NATO doctrine of "double containment": on the one hand, they contained the Red Bear in the East; on the other, they contained the mythical and unpredictable German in the West. Small wonder, therefore, that nobody in Washington or at Quai d'Orsay was ecstatic with the sudden unification of Germany; nobody was too ecstatic with the sudden disintegration of Yugoslavia, either. In the supreme irony of history, this time around it is not the proverbial "ugly German" who is destroying the Versailles architecture. This time, the Versailles architecture is falling apart due to its surreal Potemkin Hollywood-like facade. Woodrow Wilson and his progeny have suffered a serious defeat in Europe.

The whole holy story of the Balkans has just begun to unravel. The Serbian leadership in Belgrade shows great concern for Serbs living in Croatia and Bosnia, but ignores the rights of the swelling tide of Albanians within its own house. Albanians in Serbia, like the Palestinians, have perfectly learned an ancient wisdom, which Christian Europe forgot long ago: demography is the continuation of politics by other, more enjoyable means. Any cohabitation in the Balkans, any brand of federalism or "power-sharing," which Western pundits preach until their dying breath, is out of the question. Endless wars seem to be the only answer. At some point, some outsider from a distant galaxy may reassemble bits and pieces of the scattered Berlin Wall and fence off different versions of the ethnic truth here. Multiethnic countries are like prisons, in which citizen-inmates communicate with the Other only after each is granted his own territorial imperative. Crammed into one promiscuous cell, all hell breaks loose. Short of a giant mine field separating Serbs and Croatians today, or Poles and Russians tomorrow, Europe will be entering another chapter of the Hundred Years War. When different historical destinies clash, when different national mythologies collide, and when different geopolitical tectonic plates start rattling under Eurasia, then the myth of a united Europe will sound like a titanic joke.

Today it is the turn of ex-Yugoslavs to live the violent beauty of their congested multiethnic laboratory. Tomorrow it may be the turn of multiracial Marseilles, Frankfurt, or Brussels. The West is moving full-speed ahead into its own Yugoslav pathology. Last year's events in sunny Los Angeles have shown that no paradigm, no academic model, no formula, and no single truth can supply an answer for our multicultural future. The multicultural daydream functions nicely in soft, sunny, "cool," consumer society; with the first heavy clouds it spells chaos of unbelievable proportions. Emile Cioran was right when he wrote that if we knew what the future holds for us, we would immediately strangle our children. ◁c▷

The Brownings

(For Katherine McAlpine)

by Richard Moore

Metaphysical dread
made their spirits so restive!
Confined to her bed . . .
he found that suggestive.

But her father loathed art.
So—cleverly, wittily—
they out-foxed the old fart
and eloped to Italy.

To accomplish these ends,
they had many to thank—
their servants, their friends
and their pounds in the bank.

Taint art with no penny!
No, 'taint; but for the true
and the beautiful, any
old trust fund will do.

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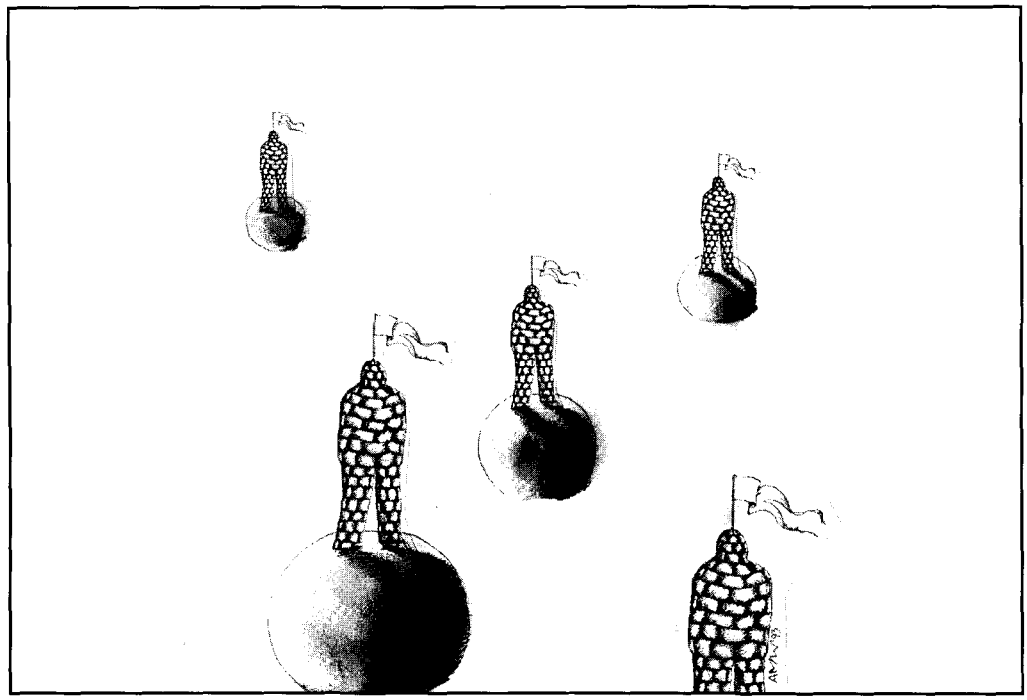
Shades of White

Russia's New Right Opposition

by Wayne Allensworth



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

"Mankind is in crisis . . . a long crisis which began 300, and in some places, 400 years ago, when people turned away from religion. . . . It is a crisis which led the East to Communism and the West to a pragmatic society. It is the crisis of materialism." Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.

Following the collapse of communism, Russia finds herself an orphan of the disintegrated Soviet Empire. She has embarked on a course of reform that is essentially a search for a new identity. Boris Yeltsin's "team" of Westernizing reformers had hoped to integrate Russia into the Global Village through the auspices of the IMF and the World Bank and through the embrace of democratic ideology. The government's program has been met with opposition not only from the old *nomenklatura* and the neocommunists, but from a nascent "national-patriotic" movement. This amorphous movement opposes not just specific points of the government's policy, but the general cultural direction of integrationism. Its battle with the government is a struggle over Russian identity, and much of its criticisms echo those of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who may well become the intellectual and spiritual center of a movement that has yet to adequately define itself.

At the April 1992 Congress of People's Deputies, Boris Yeltsin and his partisans encountered staunch opposition from a group whose primary goal was to block the continuation of "team" leader Egor Gaydar's "shock therapy" approach to economic reform. The pro-Yeltsin press was quick to brand the opposition "red-brown," meaning neocommunist or chauvinist-fascist. What this political tar-brushing missed was the "white" element inherent in the opposition.

Russia's whites, led by the Christian Democrats and Constitutional Democrats, or Cadets, are traditionalists who fear, among other things, the secular Westernizing of Russia by the youthful cosmopolites of Yeltsin's "team" and the concomitant loss of what remains of Russia's national identity. It is a mistake to dismiss all of them as extremists, for other government critics such as Vice President Alexander Rutskoy, who have not stained themselves with choosing the "red-browns" for bedfellows, are espousing a similar line that stresses Russia's unique cultural identity.

The "national-patriotic" opposition composed of "whites" and "center-rightists" such as Rutskoy has struck the chord of national identity, and its resonance is being felt across Russia. Recent polling shows that Russians are reluctant to follow the "Western model" wholesale, that interest in traditional religion is growing, and that the growing phenomenon of keen interest in, and sympathy with, the deposed and murdered (some would say martyred) Czar Nicholas II denotes a people thirsty for the sustenance that only the elixir of national identity can provide. The national-patriots' lack of a philosophical standard-bearer may soon be assuaged by the return to Russia of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who could become the moral compass of a patriotic movement too often associated with the spiritual stain of anti-Semitism and imperialism.

In pre-revolutionary Russia, the peasantry, clergy, nobility, and middle class provided the pillars on which the patrimonial czarist state rested. Russia's new national-patriots see themselves as the inheritors of this tradition, but not without the reservations that come from the passage of time, the historical impossibility (and undesirability) of reconstituting the *ancien*

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régime, and the lessons to be learned from the Western experience. Indeed, Russia's neowhites embrace private property and the market, and, while some remain monarchist, they are, in the main, constitutional monarchists. Hence, national-patriots reject the patrimonial state, a state in which, according to historian Richard Pipes, "authority over people (sovereignty) and objects (proprietorship) is combined." They propose instead to build a paternalistic state (they stress "social protection" for those suffering under "shock therapy") and find their political and economic mentor in czarist reform minister Pytor Stolypin. They envision a New Russia based on the peasantry (free farmers owning their own land), a middle class (small-business owners, white-collar workers, intelligentsia), industrial workers, and clergy. This vision of a revamped, streamlined Russia combines the elements of effective governance and economy (rule of law, representative government, private property) with spirituality (a special place for the church in society) and protection of Russia's historical patrimony (monuments, churches, natural resources). It is this belief in Christianity as the moral basis of society that separates the national-patriots from the extremist elements of the opposition: the virulent anti-Semitism and chauvinism of the secular nationalist demagogue Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the flirtations with paganism of the black-shirted storm troopers of *Pamyat* (Memory), the national Bolshevism of "brown" ex-KGB General Sterligov, and the communism of the "reds." The national-patriots accept on the basis of observation and of the historical experience of Europe, America, and Japan that individual liberty coupled with property rights and limited government has been largely successful in producing wealthy and relatively stable societies; to that extent they are not anti-Western at all, as they are often labeled. The national-patriotic contention that such a system must be built within the parameters of Russian culture and history, with an eye to a revival of Russian traditions and the ideal of a society of small-holders and businessmen, is hardly an absurdity. Japan's success, after all, is based on just such an enterprising plan of national reconstruction.

Yet the label "xenophobia" hangs like an albatross about the neck of national-patriots. Their reluctance to countenance large-scale foreign investment, a position not held by center-rightists like Rutskoy, doubtless feeds this misperception. The fear of more extreme elements that the West wishes to "buy up" Russia as part of a plan to turn her into an exploited milk-cow, drained of natural resources and receiving nothing in return, is balanced by a more levelheaded assessment of massive Western investment as the possible carrier of the disease that is corroding the West itself from the inside: secular humanism. Again, such sentiments echo those of Solzhenitsyn. In a 1974 interview, while defending himself against his critics, Solzhenitsyn pointed to the source of the West's moral decay: the Enlightenment. "Just as mankind once became aware of the intolerable and mistaken deviation of the late Middle Ages and recoiled in horror from it, so too must we take account of the disastrous deviation of the late Enlightenment. We have become hopelessly enmeshed in our slavish worship of all that is pleasant, all that is comfortable, all that is material—we worship things, we worship products. Will we ever succeed in shaking off this burden, in giving free reign to the spirit that was breathed into us at birth, that spirit which distinguished us from the animal world?" The Enlightenment gave birth to the Jacobinism that inspired the Bolsheviks, while Jacobinism's errant half-brother, social democracy, burrowed itself into the impressionable minds of chattering classes everywhere. Thus did the "democratic" Trojan horse, complete with a belly full of secular humanist liberalism, enter the domain of our own Republic's borders. National-patriotism, having survived the Bolshevik virus, understandably does not wish to expose the battered Russian organism to another, albeit milder, strain of that same disease.

In his 1990 pamphlet "How Are We to Reconstitute Russia?" Solzhenitsyn stresses the importance of the spiritual and moral health of the individual as the guarantor of a moral and democratic society. For Solzhenitsyn and like-minded thinkers, the mistake of man-centered Enlightenment rationalism is misplaced faith in legalistic mechanisms as the foundation of a law-based state. He therefore rejects the humanist faith in bureaucratic institutions with its concomitant legalism. Like Tocqueville, who opined that "if faith be wanting in [man], he must be subject; and if he be free, he must believe," the national-patriots, in the words of Solzhenitsyn, hold that "the moral origins [of a just society] must stand higher than the judicial": thus their stress on obligations as well as rights, the elemental importance of religion in society, and self-restraint. Rutskoy's call for the reanimation of Russia through the village, the whites' belief in the political power of Russian Orthodoxy, and Solzhenitsyn's stress on individual morality are not only modern-day reflections of 19th-century Slavophile articles of faith, but manifestations of a deeper insight, once commonly held in the West: that democratic institutions are built from the bottom up through an organic civil society, which evolves from voluntary associations of individuals acting within restraints built on religion, tradition, and custom. Tocqueville well knew that liberty and individualism may degenerate into selfish egocentrism, that men must "preserve their religion as their conditions become more equal" to counteract the "dangerous propensities" present in the democratic system that "tend to isolate [men] from each other, to concentrate every man's attention upon himself [thereby opening] the soul to an inordinate love of material gratification."

For the national-patriots, democracy is not an end in itself, whose establishment has meaning through the fulfillment of prophesies about the "end of history" or through acceptance into a New World Order. Democracy is a means to revive Russia and free her from the tyranny that curbed her development as a nation during "times of trouble" in the prerevolutionary period and sought to destroy or warp her national identity under the communist regime. Victor Aksyuchits, Chairman of the Russian Christian Democratic Movement, sees democracy as "a system in which society itself can act on its political wishes." Rutskoy envisions Russia as a great power once more, revived and strengthened by democratic reforms. Solzhenitsyn says "we choose democracy with an awareness of its shortcomings," primarily to "avoid tyranny." Likewise, national-patriots choose democracy as an instrument for the betterment of the nation, not as a replacement ideology for communism. The secular, ideological "democracy" of the universalists of the Global Village school is what Solzhenitsyn identifies as one of the West's "weaknesses," a pitfall national-patriots hope to avoid. Believing that only Russians can determine what is best for Russia—and where and how to proceed with reforms—it is no surprise that the national-patriots resent the *diktat* of IMF conditions for economic reform and reject dependency on

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foreign aid as beneath the dignity of an independent nation and as counterproductive to the building of entrepreneurship in Russia.

Perplexing and divisive questions remain for a movement still seeking to define itself, questions which have prompted splits and which are wrapped up in the larger question of defining Russian national identity. Such terms as "nationalism" and "patriotism," as used in the Russian context, have yet to be adequately pinned down, thus leaving the whole phenomenon of the "national-patriotic" movement without context.

Still, national-patriotic ideas have gained currency in Russia. As noted earlier, interest in tradition, religion, and history among ordinary Russians is growing in the spiritual black hole that the communists have left behind. Alexander Rutskoy, having blasted anti-Semitism at the February 1992 "Congress of Civil and Patriotic Forces," has emerged as the most credible national-patriotic politician. Rutskoy, together with Boris Yeltsin, is one of the two or three most trusted politicians in Russia as reflected in polls taken since the beginning of the year. The white Cadets and Christian Democrats, despite their small numbers, remain an influential element in the parliamentary opposition. What impact Solzhenitsyn's return will have on the political constellation is still unclear, though his prominent position in Russian life was amply demonstrated by Boris Yeltsin's decision to call the reclusive literary genius during the June 1992 Washington summit. The two men spoke not only of Solzhenitsyn's return to Russia, but of an issue of great importance to the national-patriotic movement, the fate of the millions of Russians now residing in the newly independent republics of the splintered Soviet Empire.

What the national-patriots are faced with is the most daunting of tasks: creating a "modern" market economy without the attendant social poison of the West's modernity, that is, the collapse of traditional culture (or in the case of postcommunist Russia, of the possibility of salvaging and reanimating what remains of that culture) and the concomitant Westernization of Russia, through a secular and vacuous global "pop culture."

The apparent inability of Western political elites to understand such fears (and consequently, to label all national-patriots as antireform and thus dangerous) underscores the intellectual arrogance and moral vacuity of a body of opinion that presumes to not only know what is best for Russia, but that treats with contempt all those who may question the wisdom of turning over national sovereignty to international institutions, which, by definition, are not concerned with the national interests of those whom they require to undergo political, economic, and cultural surgery.

Perhaps the opinion of Rutskoy, the opposition of the whites, and the stinging criticism of the towering figure of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn should alert us, the secularized West, and particularly we in America, to examine ourselves and reevaluate not only our relations with other countries in the post-Cold War era, when no ideological foreign enemy faces us, but our own condition. Perhaps the national-patriots are right to believe, as apparently they do, that some kind of modernization coupled with liberty need not signal the end of the mixture of traditional culture, religion, and patriotism that makes each nation unique and that gave rise to our own Republic. ©

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The Zhirinovsky Phenomenon

by Alexander Yanov

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Vladimir Zhirinovsky, one of President Yeltsin's most formidable opponents, is not well known in the West. In the former Soviet Union, though, he is despised and feared by both political camps: the reformers and the "patriots." Even Leonid Kravchuk, president of the Ukraine and a former communist, considers Zhirinovsky extremely dangerous. "Do you want to deal with Zhirinovsky's Russia instead of Yeltsin's?" he once warned his feisty parliamentarians. Zhirinovsky appeared out of nowhere on Russia's political map: the classic emergence of an outsider in troubled times. At first these men are not taken seriously, but sometimes they get lucky. In Germany, in 1933, a frustrated painter from Linz, Austria, became lucky indeed.

In the 1991 Russian presidential elections the previously unknown Zhirinovsky, founder of the miniscule Liberal Democratic Party, came in third, after the popular Yeltsin and former Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov. He was far ahead of all the other opposition leaders. In fact, Zhirinovsky garnered six million votes—no joke for a candidate who materialized only yesterday, especially if one remembers that in the middle of another civilizational collapse in Russia, in 1917, Lenin came to power with nowhere near as many votes.

What are Zhirinovsky's positions and who are his followers? While campaigning for president in 1991, he promised that he would feed the country within 72 hours. How? "Very simply. I'll move the troops, about 1.5 million strong, into the former GDR; rattle my nuclear sabers; and they'll give me everything." By "them" he naturally meant the West. To be sure, this would be a gross violation of international law, but this is precisely Zhirinovsky's trump card. He is ready and willing to break all accepted international rules, and this is the nature of his appeal in postcommunist Russia. "What price Paris?" he would ask. "How about London? Washington? Los Angeles? How much are you willing to pay so I don't wipe them from the face of the earth with my SS-18's? You doubt me? Want to take a chance? Let's get started."

Western politicians may assure their constituents that the nuclear nightmare which has been hanging over everyone's head for half a century is over, but Zhirinovsky knows that until at least 2003 Soviet SS-18's will still be aimed at the West. He hopes to become Russia's president long before then, and from that moment on all agreements will be null and void. True, Yeltsin has promised to take the missiles off alert status, but Zhirinovsky will not fulfill Yeltsin's promise if and when he becomes president. By the same token, he has no intention of adhering to any international agreements based on nuclear parity or mutual assured destruction. In contrast to conventional politicians, Zhirinovsky is perfectly ready to risk mutual destruction. He feels there is nothing wrong with perpetrating a vast hijack, using any weapons, including nuclear. He has no notion of legitimacy, property, or law. For him the main thing is Russia's nuclear fist: the readiness to blackmail prosperous

This is a chapter from Alexander Yanov's forthcoming book Weimar Russia. *The piece was translated and edited by Leon Steinmetz.*

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neighbors, the conviction that when push comes to shove they will not dare take the chance of mutual destruction. And that is enough for him. Those who might think that this is just an elementary form of pillage fail to realize that Zhirinovsky, like Hitler, is creating a new political universe in which naked force and the willingness to risk not just one's own fate, but the fate of the world, are prime factors. This new reality perfectly reflects the situation of his country—a situation of total collapse—and he wants to project this collapse onto the entire world.

I spoke with Zhirinovsky. I have no doubt that such would be the order that he will try to impose upon the unsuspecting world, if at some point he indeed moves into the Kremlin as Russia's president. And he will be absolutely convinced that he is right.

Zhirinovsky's constituency is growing rapidly. Who are these people who vote for him? In a strange and paradoxical way, they represent the success of communism. They are the populace that the communist regime succeeded in producing. Like most people in the West, I don't believe in *Homo Sovieticus*, that in only three generations the Soviet regime could create a new breed of humanity: people without conscience, without honor, without decency. It didn't. Still, a considerable part of the former Soviet Union's population has been morally corrupted. This degradation of their society, intensified by catastrophic economic deterioration and social polarization, matters. In present-day Russia there are millions of people who think, speak, and feel as Zhirinovsky does. It is they who voted for him in 1991. They, too, reject all conventions of the civilized world and are ready to do anything to humiliate their enemies and leap into well-being at somebody else's expense. These are the people whom Zhirinovsky represents. The ongoing economic calamity keeps generating more and more of their kind, and they might one day pave his way to success.

I interviewed Zhirinovsky in June 1992 in Moscow, in the office of his Liberal Democratic Party. The office itself is quite pathetic, a converted apartment in a shabby building, but it is located in the very center of Moscow. We spoke for over an hour. I knew about Zhirinovsky's philosophy; still, to actually hear him stating his positions was a shock. He openly admitted that his support comes from the *lumpenproletariat* and that he hopes for further "lumpenisation" of his people. His goals and plans as to how to deal with the country's problems are simple, and therefore appealing to his barely literate supporters.

What to do about strikes? "Strikers to jail; racketeers we'll send abroad to defend our national reputation; and we'll get cheap labor from Asia. . . . We'll force them to take 100 rubles a month and be glad of it." What to do with the breakaway republics? Stop selling them fuel and blockade them from the outside. He is sure they will come crawling back, voluntarily: "Take Georgia, for example. Georgia will crumble, will rejoin Russia, retaining only the rights of a province. That is all you'd need for Central Asia to return of its own accord to Russia; again, as a province." Moreover, Zhirinovsky believes that Afghanistan, and even Iran and Turkey, will join. And then: "We ought to make use of the conflicts between the Turks and Armenians, on the one hand, and the Kurds and Iranians on the other. If we play on these conflicts, we'll be able to establish our rule over this entire region."

AY: "So you approve a colonial policy?"

VZ: "Yes, of course."

Here is a passage from Zhirinovsky's interview with the Lithuanian newspaper *The Republic*: "The Baltics are Russian territory. I will destroy you. In the border zone of the Smolensk region, I'm going to dig out nuclear waste [and] you Litvaks are going to die of radiation sickness. First, I'll get the Russians and Poles out. I'll be the overlord; I'll be the tyrant! I'll play it as Hitler did."

In present-day Russia there are millions of people who think, speak, and feel as Zhirinovsky does. It is they who voted for him in 1991. They, too, reject all conventions of the civilized world and are ready to do anything to humiliate their enemies and leap into well-being at somebody else's expense.

One may say that this sounds not just stupid and irresponsible, but plainly insane. Yet this is precisely the impression Zhirinovsky wants to convey. He is no conventional politician and has only contempt for the eggheads. His audiences love him—his impetuousness, his simple solutions, his magnificent disdain for common sense. As to theatrics, Zhirinovsky is the best in contemporary Russian politics.

One example will illustrate the distinction between him and other opposition leaders. All of them are against giving the Kuril Islands back to Japan. Zhirinovsky is, of course, against it also. The difference is that they are arguing with the Russian president while he speaks directly to the Japanese. His argument runs along these lines: "All right. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not enough for you. You want another one? No? So, forget about the Islands." Russian audiences swallow this enthusiastically. Such statements give people who have lost all hope precisely what they need: a sense of power.

By comparison with this kind of drive and energy, the other opposition leaders look like ineffectual babblers. Thus, Zhirinovsky's intellectual weakness turns out to be his main asset. Furthermore, he is a strong speaker with Hitler-style charisma. And like Hitler, he is proud that intellectuals despise him. "How many votes do they have?" he asks. "Yes, the Moscow intelligentsia is against me. But that's a hundred thousand, that's a million, or three million, or ten. But voters—you need 55 million."

AY: "Yet not the entire population of the country is 'lumpenised.' There are still people who are in their right minds."

VZ: "There are. They'll vote against me, but they'll be a minority."

AY: "But so far, they are a majority. So you hope for further corruption, for degradation of the masses?"

VZ: "Yes."

AY: "That's your credo?"

VZ: "Yes, yes, yes!"

AY: "Well, you'll certainly get a monstrous country, which will swallow you. You promise to change everything within 72 hours. But at the 73rd hour, your lumpens will eat you alive! Because actually you won't be able to do what you promise—

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not within 72 hours, 72 days, nor 72 weeks."

VZ: "History will tell."

Zhirinovsky's game plan is very simple. His army of mental cripples is already huge, and its ranks multiply every day of Russia's unbearably hopeless existence. Jobless, homeless demobilized soldiers, refugees from the republics who have suddenly found themselves foreigners in their own countries—this continuous displacement brings millions of potential recruits. The goal, as he says, is to unite them under his banner and bring them to the ballot boxes.

Zhirinovsky is perhaps the only Russian politician whose election campaign is already in full swing. He has traveled through all of Russia with election speeches and has set up campaign headquarters in dozens of the country's regions. "I just came back from Vologda," he told me. "If you asked people to vote today in Vologda, I'd get 60 percent of the vote. Within a year or two I'll get the same percentage in the other 82 regions. . . . I'm now the only one who's traveling around the country, the only one whose name is known. You ask ten people—eight will name me, and two will name Yeltsin. They'll say: 'Yes, there's Zhirinovsky and Yeltsin,' and that's it. And they'll say 'We don't want Yeltsin.' 'Who do you want?' 'Zhirinovsky.'"

Of course, he exaggerates. A poll of potential voters taken in 13 cities at the end of June 1992, subsequent to our conversation, showed that Yeltsin would still get 33 percent of the vote and Zhirinovsky only 5 percent. However, one cannot deny that his campaign brings results. As in 1991, he is again ahead of all his opponents, including Nikolai Ryzhkov (3 percent) and Speaker of the Parliament Ruslan Hasbulatov (3 percent), not to mention such favorites of the Russian right-wing press as General Albert Makashov (2 percent) and the most influential of the M.P.'s, Sergei Baburin (1 percent).

If Yeltsin is out of the game by 1995, as he promised, Zhirinovsky will undoubtedly be the most popular opposition leader. A recent poll among the peasants of the Volga region astonished sociologists. Answering the question as to whom among the Russian politicians they would like to see as president, the overwhelming majority named three people: Malenkov, Brezhnev, and Zhirinovsky! The only one of the three who is still around is our hero. But Zhirinovsky is not inclined to wait until 1995. He believes that there is a good chance the election will be held earlier: "They're now collecting signatures to impeach Yeltsin. If they succeed, then we have new elections. Or if he dies."

His short-term prognosis was as follows: "The situation will get worse. If not by October, then by March [1993] there will be a different political regime in Russia. The patriots will come to power." Zhirinovsky certainly erred in his chronology. What happened in March was just a perilous constitutional crisis and a near-impeachment of President Yeltsin rather than a change in regime. Still, the "patriots" are indeed immeasurably stronger now than at the time of his prognosis. To be sure, they don't like Zhirinovsky any more than the democrats do. Yet he is certain they'll come to him because, without Yeltsin, there is no other politician in Russia of comparable national stature.

So perhaps, after all, Zhirinovsky's presidency is not the outrageously unlikely fantasy it seems at first glance. A journalist, Vladimir Nazarov, comments: "Even if Zhirinovsky himself disappears tomorrow, the Zhirinovsky phenomenon will not disappear with him. His place will be taken immediately by someone who is smarter, shrewder, and more stable. But he will inherit Zhirinovsky's program and his image of a man of the people. He will come forward and say, 'Don't believe anybody. Believe me. I am the only one who knows how we can get out of this mess.' And the people, frustrated and tired, will take the bait."

I am not sure Nazarov is entirely correct. It is not easy to create a national reputation, and the revolutionary years 1990 and 1991, when Zhirinovsky created his, were extraordinary. Now, there are people among the opposition leaders who *are* smarter, shrewder, and more stable than Zhirinovsky. Yet none of them can measure up to him. Why not? Precisely because none of them has such a "lumpen" disregard for logic, such an amoral philosophy, such a total lack of decency, and further, such charisma, as Zhirinovsky. I think that until the total crisis in which Russia finds herself today is overcome, Zhirinovsky will be on stage. This, despite the fact that in August 1992 the government dealt him a major blow, declaring the registration of his Liberal Democratic Party illegal, i.e., outlawing it. But after all, Hitler had worse setbacks. He was even imprisoned for a time. And did it stop him?

Add to this that law enforcement in Weimar Russia is weaker than it was even in Weimar Germany. Just consider what Zhirinovsky has been able to accomplish since his party was officially outlawed: the number of its newspapers has grown from one to five; detachments of armed "Zhirinovsky Falcons" have been dispatched to help Iraq and Serbia; a shadow government with Zhirinovsky occupying the positions of Prime Minister and Minister of War has been announced.

In parting with me Zhirinovsky proclaimed, "Give me one billion dollars and in a year from now I'll be the president of Russia." Whether with a billion or not, given all his recent expenses somebody from abroad seems to be supporting him handsomely. Meanwhile he behaves as if he were already president: on a recent trip to Munich to meet the German hard-right leadership he declared the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 legally in force.

Weimar Russia is no less a powder keg than Weimar Germany once was. And although it is right that the West should promote democracy and a free market in Russia, it should perhaps—while democracy is not yet there but the missiles still are—consider how to protect itself with something more sophisticated than paper treaties and humanitarian aid for the current unstable regime. ◁

LIBERAL ARTS

NUTRA-SWEET REVENGE

A judge recently threw out a lawsuit filed by three Washington State inmates who contended that the "nutra-loaf" they were served constituted cruel and unusual punishment. Nutra-loaf, which is served to inmates who throw their food or who are "extremely assaultive or volatile," includes a variety of vegetables, beef or chicken, apples, eggs, and potatoes. A nine-ounce slab is considered a complete meal and is less dangerous and easier to clean up than other prison entrees.

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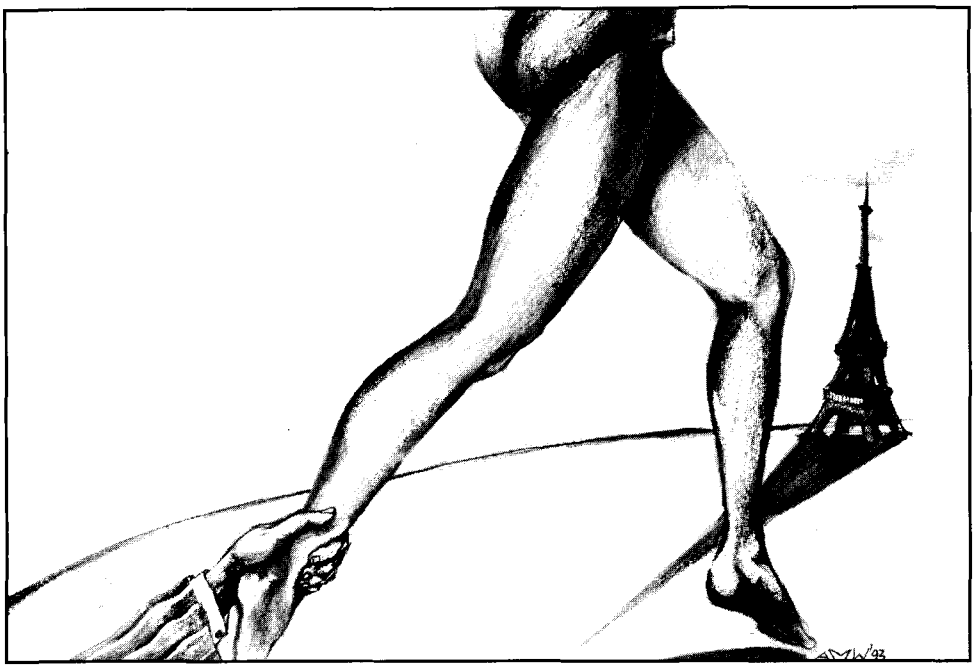
Red Panties

by Akosh Chernush



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Vanessa was the first American woman in my life. "You forced a superpower to her knees," congratulated my friend Peter, when I told him what had happened the previous night. Things went considerably quicker in Paris in 1958; I had no reason to beat around the bush posing questions about bisexual lovers, blood transfusions, or junky boyfriends. Vanessa herself obviously wasn't a superpower; however, as an East European full of 50's macho, I felt some pride that I had successfully swept a native of the American superpower off her feet, even though she was not exactly the type that I'd generally imagined Americans to be. She was beautiful, with impeccable curves, gorgeous long legs, a great sense of humor and self-irony that redeemed almost everything else, even the fact that she was a radical Marxist.

I picked her up in a Montparnasse bistro, the Select, where Peter and I dropped in often, sometimes several times a day, to check for anything new on the flesh market. We sat down at a table next to hers and borrowed her Zippo to light up yellow Gauloises, cheap French cigarettes of industrial strength. We started a conversation in our heavily accented but already fluent French. The girl was noticeably intrigued by us when she learned that we were Hungarian students who had fled to France after the Soviet repression of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. "*Vous êtes contre-révolutionnaires, alors?*" she asked with pretended fear, as if the next second we would attack, with knives between our teeth, the international revolution. World revolution was her all. Vanessa was a Trotskyite, and she rushed to explain to us that the Russian communists committed a fatal mistake when they tried to build communism in a poor country without any democratic tradition. "You may condemn what the Soviets did in Hungary," she continued. "I am not for violence, but on the other hand, the Soviets had to do something, because communism still hadn't deep enough roots in Hungary." I almost lost my temper when she went on explaining to me what had really happened two years ago in Budapest.

Before and after I met Vanessa, a good many other French, American, and German leftists tried to explain to me what had happened in Budapest, ignoring the reality that I had personally witnessed almost every important development leading to the Revolution and its defeat. Later, for my participation in some revolutionary events and for several anti-Soviet articles I had published in the revolutionary press in Budapest, a so-called people's court condemned me to death in absentia. These leftist students usually repeated fellow-traveler arguments, which openly or in veiled form defended the Soviet action in Hungary. Some of them remembered the large headline of a Paris communist daily, which had sent its best reporter, André Stil, to Budapest. Stil affirmed after the Soviet invasion, on the front page of *L'Humanité*, that "Budapest smiles again." A first-year student at the elitist École Normale Supérieure reproached me that "you Hungarians, with your unnecessary little rebellion, endangered the super-powers' peaceful coexistence." She added, "next time consider the political realities before you move even your little finger!"

In 1958, it was still difficult to score if one wasn't well versed in and kindly disposed to Marxist dialectics. Most of the girls I met at the Sorbonne, the student cafeterias, or the bistros were Marxists, some kind of leftists, radicals, Third Worldists, or else they had cats and preoccupations in which I could not be involved or to which I could not add my word. I had run away from Hungarian comrades; now in Montparnasse, I confronted American ones, young Jane Fonda types, before they

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converted to aerobics or married media moguls.

I tried to argue with them, stay civilized, but it was difficult to persuade a convinced fellow traveler. A communist? Impossible. Only once did I get in a real rage. That was Christmas, 1957: I was invited to celebrate the day with a leftist but otherwise quite nice couple. The young wife was an American, raised in Ecuador in a diplomatic family; her husband, Tala, a painter, was also a refugee, from Franco's Spain. He had a good reputation in artistic circles and was a fanatic communist. This became obvious when the Hungarian Revolution arose in conversation and I found myself defending Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty against Tala's accusation that this head of the Hungarian Catholic Church, jailed by the communists and liberated during the Revolution, was a fascist counterrevolutionary who had worked for the reestablishment of feudal estates and sought refuge in the U.S. Embassy in Budapest after the Soviet invasion of Hungary. For several reasons Mindszenty wasn't an especial hero of mine, but I felt it wasn't fair to malign somebody who was persecuted after the Nazi occupation of Hungary for trying to save Jewish lives and who, against the communists, courageously resisted as long as he could. Tala sarcastically inquired, "How many acres from collective farms has your cardinal promised you?" The situation became ludicrous. Christmas or not, I'd been drinking, and I got mad, yelled *"J'en ai assez,"* took my coat, and left without saying goodbye.

Peter wasn't interested in Vanessa. But he saw that I liked the American girl. Before letting me lose my temper the way I had at Tala's, he whispered to me in Hungarian: "What is your priority? You want to discuss politics or you want to . . . ?" Peter was right. I quickly came up with a joke about the difference between a Stalinist and a Trotskyite. We then took a long walk, ate a cheap couscous dinner at Rue St-Gregoire de Tours, drank some Algerian wine, and spent a beautiful night together.

Interestingly, most of the women who became close to me in the coming years belonged politically to my enemy's camp. I later settled in the States, and, in New York, dated Sharon for almost two years. Once she took me home for Thanksgiving dinner and presented me thus to her parents: "This is my sweet little fascist." All four of us smiled idiotically. Her father, a New York lawyer who, in his youth, fought in Spain as a member of the Lincoln Battalion, mentioned that he had met several Hungarian volunteers during that civil war and dropped the name of Ernó Geró, one of the most hated Hungarian Party leaders of '56. It was well known that Geró, at party command, studied Catalan in Moscow, traveled to Spain by orders from Stalin, and tortured and murdered Trotskyite and anarchist activists in Barcelona basements. But I kept my mouth shut. I was so fond of Sharon that I was prepared to accept every insult, every humiliation, just to hold her and love her.

I wondered if it was really Vanessa's, or Sharon's, fault that she was fed drawing-room communism along with her mother's milk? That since childhood she was brainwashed at home? That her indoctrination began each morning at the breakfast table? Later, even my wife, not a product of an even slightly pink environment, asked me unexpectedly: "Something I still can't understand is why almost 100 percent of your suffering East Europeans always vote for the Communist Party? If they really don't like the regime, as you seem sure, they just don't have to vote. It's impossible to punish or exterminate a whole nation because it refuses to vote. I'm not talking about malcontent individuals, I mean nations, and if whole peoples still go vote, then they have only themselves to blame." Another time she noted that "it is impossible to have an intimate dinner with you. Around the table, next to us, there always sit the communist regimes." Our eventual divorce had nothing to do with politics. Although far apart, we telephoned each other when the Berlin Wall collapsed, and we both cried from happiness.

There was another telling episode in my relations with Vanessa, not in France, but in the States, where I first went as a tourist in the summer of 1959. Vanessa had returned several months earlier to continue her studies at Barnard. At my arrival, she was vague, finally confessing that she had a kind of steady boyfriend—Rufus!—but everything got back into the old groove the moment we got horizontal. She showed me New York from Central Park to Greenwich Village. When we arrived at the Museum of Modern Art, even my poor English allowed me to understand her saying to the lady cashier: "Please give me a ticket, and a children's ticket for my cousin," pointing at me. The cashier looked at me, perplexed because not only was I older than Vanessa but I looked older as well. Vanessa explained, "My cousin comes from Europe and appears older because he suffered a lot during the Hungarian counterrevolution." What she said seemed so absurd and surprising that the confused cashier immediately let me go in on a child's ticket. I couldn't complain; she saved me money. The fast one that she had pulled cheered up both of us, and she could rise to the occasion and tease me politically again.

After the MOMA visit, we walked to the East Side and took a bus to the Ukrainian section of the Lower East Side where, according to Vanessa, there was a restaurant with the best Romanian pastrami sandwich in the world. Vanessa figured I should have one because she knew that you can't find pastrami in Europe, especially not in Romania. Vanessa came from an Irish Catholic family, with an uncle who had been a missionary to China and a cousin who worked as a Maryknoll sister in Bolivia. She explained that here, in the world's greatest city, everybody is a little bit Jewish, even Italians, Irish, and Anglos, at least in diet. At the same time, many Jewish kids have Christmas trees, and on St. Patrick's Day, Jews join Harlem Baptists to help the Irish celebrate along Fifth Avenue. "Personally, I like the fact that we celebrate so many different holidays," Vanessa remarked, "because I'm an atheist and atheists have no red-letter days."

I began to feel the jet lag as we walked from the bus station to the restaurant. Vanessa, still full of energy, quickened her steps, putting a distance between us. She prankishly challenged me to "Look! I walk like a black girl. Dad always says I walk like a Negro." I had no idea how black women walked or that such generalizations can be justified; however, I obediently looked and admired because I loved her legs and behind. Back in Paris I had often dropped back so she could walk a bit ahead of me just so I could enjoy watching her shapely long legs and her magnificent derrière, which was outlined by the seams of her panties. I confessed to her once that, while I couldn't stand her political views, every time I glanced at her my breathing stopped.

As I wished we were back home, we entered the nearly empty restaurant. A waiter of Methuselah's vintage brought us three-story-high hot pastrami on pumpernickel with Polish pickles and Dijon mustard, nicely cut in two and held togeth-

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er with toothpicks that had miniature paper flags. The pastrami was as good and as unusual as promised, but too rich for a Hungarian stomach now accustomed to French food. "Good, but too heavy," I told the old man when he came to refill our coffee cups. "I never said it's light," he answered. "It's heavy and probably killed more Jews than Hitler. I wouldn't touch it at my age. Order something lighter next time, smoked turkey or tuna fish. When Trotsky came here, he ate tuna fish." Vanessa had seemed bored earlier, but she came to life and said, "Trotsky really came here? When?"

"Oh, a long time ago, early in the century. He often ate there at the same table where you're eating," the waiter replied, sitting down opposite us, as he sensed that in Vanessa he'd found an audience. "He lived on the West Side, but he came here, liked our food, and most of the time I had to wait on his table because I was the youngest. The other waiters avoided serving him as much as they could. Trotsky never tipped. And at that time, we lived from tips; we had no formal salary, no minimum hourly pay, no nothing. I frankly said to him once, Mr. Bronstein (that's how we knew him then), my father is a scholarly man and he hasn't found a job yet, my mother works in a dressmaker's shop and doesn't make much money, I have three sisters and a brother, and tips are my only income. Why don't you give me a few cents? Bronstein said that he would never give anything to the capitalists' lackeys. He called me a lackey. Me, a kid of 13! I would never forgive that. And he just cut the conversation, returning to the pages of an agriculture magazine, looking at tractor advertisements. Next time I again called his attention to this tip thing, and he answered: Why don't you form a union? Why let yourself be exploited?"

Vanessa became noticeably gloomy, but she faithfully interpreted for me in French everything that I didn't catch in English. "Trotsky went home, they had this big mess in Russia, and there were voices saying we must go back, for working people Russia is the right place now, there will be no exploitation," the old man continued. "First of all, that time, when the Bolsheviks came to power, my family was doing something better here. One of my sisters married a very rich man, and my parents had no desire to move again. My father said if Trotsky didn't care about you here in New York, why would he care about you over there? If he didn't understand the little man here, why would he understand him over there? I was sorry when I heard that in Mexico somebody had put an ice pick in his head; after all, he used to eat my tuna sandwiches, and even if he wasn't a good man, he was clever. If he had stayed in America, he could have gone into real estate and had office buildings downtown, skyscrapers even. Real estate was the best business. And even if he didn't make a fortune, at least his children could make it here, they could become dentists or lawyers, like my kids."

I paid for the sandwiches; Vanessa, finding my tip insufficient, left a whole dollar on the table—this back in the days when a dollar was still money, especially to a student from Europe. "If Trotsky really didn't leave tips, then Trotskyites must help," she said, but later began doubting what we had heard. "The old waiter talked nonsense. I've read several Trotsky biographies and an essay about his sojourn in America. Maybe he did forget to tip once in a while, but nothing I've read ever accused him of being insensitive or stingy. He was a generous man." "Do some research," I suggested. "That could be a great subject for a doctoral dissertation." Three weeks later, before I flew back to Paris, and as I kissed her good-bye in her West End Avenue high-ceiling apartment, her poster of the non-tipping old goat in grey Bolshevik uniform still hung on the kitchen wall. For a while, we corresponded; then, we lost touch with each other forever. At least that's what I thought.

Do all roads lead to Washington as they did 2,000 years ago to Rome? I don't know the answer to that, but I know that since I moved to Washington, I've encountered most of my old friends and acquaintances from Paris. They have come as tourists, government officials, museum curators, a zoo director, and one is even here as free Hungary's ambassador. Recently, even childhood pals and schoolmates have arrived by the dozens; after having lived as pariahs for years behind the iron curtain, they now travel as World Bank economists, musicians, writers, members of parliament, and historians who spend their days at the Library of Congress. I wasn't especially surprised even to encounter Vanessa. But what is almost unbelievable is that I recognized her by the back of her calves! She was walking her Labrador in Georgetown's Montrose Park, when I spotted that rear view. If I had encountered her face-to-face on the street I might not have recognized her. The black-haired Parisian had become a Washington redhead. She had gained a few kilos. She wore fancy designer glasses. But from the back, those calves were so familiar that I couldn't not recognize them. "Vanessa McQuinn, I presume," I said to her. She did not recognize me immediately, but when she did, she was delighted to see me.

Smiling, we sat on a park bench. "I never thought that you'd end up in the States, much less that we'd be neighbors without knowing it," she remarked. Then she lectured me because I still smoke. Waving away my cigarette smoke with a disgusted grimace, she informed me that she had stopped in 1964. She mentioned that she worked for a labor union, and, like myself, had been divorced for several years. We no longer spoke in French, the language of our youth, but in English, the language of making a living, of adulthood. So many things had happened since we last saw each other that politics were not discussed for a while. She seemed much less interested in political events now than 30 years ago. Finally I asked her if she had ever imagined that the Soviet Union would collapse so spectacularly, and during our lifetime. She said that she never thought this would happen and added in a pedagogical tone, "I don't have to tell you that this collapse would have never happened if Trotsky had been the leader instead of that paranoid mass murderer who ruled things for decades."

The memories of our passionate lovemaking and of the physical joys we had given one another in the past created a bond between us. But she could read on my face as I could detect in her eyes that these past 30-some years had done no good for our relationship. The elemental attraction that brought us together originally, overcoming even our embarrassing political differences, had vanished. Without saying it, we felt sadness as we realized that regrettably we can't turn back time. We knew we'd meet again, invite each other to parties, be friends; still, what happened in Paris can't be repeated or brought back.

It began to drizzle. She said that she had to go feed her dog. I kissed her cheek, and just to add something more personal I remarked, "Your legs are more exciting than ever." Vanessa unexpectedly switched to French and inquired, "*Et mon derrière*?"

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Who Cares Who's Number One?

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

"All the great things have been done by little nations."
—Benjamin Disraeli

Preparing For the Twenty-First Century
by Paul Kennedy
New York: Random House;
428 pp., $25.00

The Passionate Attachment: America's Involvement With Israel, 1947 to the Present
by George W. Ball and Douglas B. Ball
New York: W.W. Norton;
328 pp., $24.95

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There is definitely less to Paul Kennedy's new book than might appear on the surface of it. *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* is an odd combination of old-fashioned doomsday alarmism, the modern lust for total planning, and the equally contemporary demand for a future free of risk and insecurity. It is also written in as bland and pedestrian a style as that of any journalist or public academic on this side of the Atlantic; if Professor Kennedy is a fair indicator, then the British hegemony in respect of the English language has gone the way of the British hegemony in respect of economics, which is to say it has been Americanized. Perhaps in the 21st century it will be Nipponized as well.

Whatever new ideas are in this book, I must have missed by inadvertent catnapping. Kennedy's thesis is the already familiar argument that the so-called global economy, human mass migration, and environmental crisis are all factors in a process of transnational change that, in addition to being resistant to national control, have rendered the nation-state "the wrong sort of unit"—either too large or too small—to handle problems of historically unprecedented size and

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scope. These problems, what is more, cannot be dealt with by armed force, but only by international cooperation and a "'relocation of authority' both upward or downward"—preferably upward, since Kennedy is clearly uncomfortable with the present assertiveness of the smaller units active in the world today, which he seems to find exemplified by the ethnic separatism of the Serbian nationalists and uncooperative elements within the republics of the former Soviet Union. He is a proponent of the European Community, since "the larger logic of historical change favors the integrationists" and "Europe surely has no real alternative to *moving forward*, seeking to create an influential and responsible entity capable of meeting . . . challenges collectively in a way that twelve or twenty separate nation-states simply cannot do." The "profundity of international change," Kennedy believes, "demanding new thinking and new structures, strengthens the position of those who argue that Europe simply cannot stand still."

Professor Kennedy concedes that the nation-state is likely to hang around for a while, as it remains the "primary locus of identity of most people," the "chief institution through which societies will try to respond to change." Yet only such states as are willing to pursue "new thinking and new structures" will have a chance at being Number One—or Two, or Three, or Four—in the 21st century, a global status that Kennedy regards as both quantifiable and significant. The Professor's Benthamite, pushpin-as-good-as-poetry bias is expressed by his deprecation of Britain's willingness at the end of the last century to muddle through in accordance with national tradition rather than seek to retain its preeminent position in the world by aping foreign ones. If, in order to maintain an industrial edge over Japan, economic logic suggests the need for the United States to reorganize itself as a society of ant-people engaged in regulated calisthenics together, that possibility, Kennedy seems to imply, is worth considering at least so far as it is compatible with American values and customs: further, perhaps, since he goes on to inveigh against "fundamentalist forces, partly in reaction to globalization, gather[ing] strength to lash back, while even in democracies, nationalist and anti-foreign political movements gain ground—all of which hurts their long-term chances of 'preparing' for the future." (One hundred thirty-two pages later, the author offhandedly remarks that "societies which possess technical and educational resources, ample funds, and *cultural solidarity* [my italics] are better positioned for the next century than

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those lacking all these strengths.")

Of greater moral concern to Professor Kennedy than the relative standing of nations belonging to the First World is the relationship between them and the "developing" components of the Third World, whose future he (rightly) argues looks dismal indeed when one considers the appalling demographic and environmental problems confronting Latin America, Africa, the Near East, the Indian subcontinent, China, and Southeast Asia. Kennedy's perception that the developed world continues to widen, almost exponentially and year by year, the gap between itself and the Third World countries amounts to the assertion of a law that the convoy moves only as fast as the swiftest ship, while laggards are left behind to catch torpedoes—an accurate, if regrettable, description of modern world history. His further argument, that the law must somehow be abrogated to permit the slowest vessels to catch up and then keep pace with the vanguard, is impractical, no matter how soundly based on moral and prudential terms. It is certainly true, as Kennedy insists, that "the environmental threat, like the threat of mass migration, means that—perhaps for the first time—what the South does can hurt the North." It is also true that the professor from Oxford (today on the faculty of Yale) has, like everyone else concerned about the imbalance of wealth between North and South, no idea what might realistically be done to "solve" the "problem"—if in fact it *is* a problem. (As the late James Burnham used to say, "If there's no solution, there's no problem.") The most likely conclusion to the current crisis in the Third World is mass starvation and endemic warfare, including the invasion of the Western and Northern countries by hordes of desperate, envious, and angry people from the Eastern and Southern ones. But who can say? And how can more of the maximization thinking characteristic of the modern and postmodern West rescue them—and us—from our shared cul-de-sac? It isn't simply a matter of problem-solving.

Finally, *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* is only the most recent of those many naive and rather silly books produced by a naive and shallow age. "In view of the speed and complexity of these changes, is *any* social group really 'prepared' for the 21st century?" Professor Kennedy wonders. Well, of course not. What social group was prepared for the 19th, the 13th, or—most importantly—the first? (And what historical significance ought a professional historian assign to the arbitrary concept of centuries anyway?) Similarly, he complains that politicians today are incapable of solving even short-term problems; yet when were they ever so capable? For Kennedy, any human or historical situation that is something less than the imaginable ideal is a "problem" about which we should all be worrying, and on which the bureaucrats who staff our modern macrogovernmental entities ought to be at work. Kennedy stresses the discrepancy between an integrated world economy and an unintegrated arrangement of national and regional governments, as well as of ethnic groups and cultures, without bothering to consider how surprising this differentiation should be. Yet history has never proceeded by plan and logic, only economics has (often enough to our great detriment). Need one be a philosopher to speculate whether the end of history might be the exposure of fundamental contradictions in human nature, by which man is forced at last to admit that he is *not* as a god, an omniscient and omnipotent being, final architect and arbiter of his fate?

Certainly the division between the First and Third Worlds suggests a radical, unmediated split between abstraction and nature, brains and genitalia. Professor Kennedy, echoing Wells and Toynbee, suggests that "global society is in a race between education and catastrophe," and goes on to advocate the "reeducation of mankind" as the proper focus for global change. In fact, that reeducation began 2,000 years ago in what today is one of the most violent and crisis-ridden places on earth. Is it just possible that globally society is actually in a race between the Word and catastrophe? Such an hypothesis is not germane to Professor Kennedy's book, the true message of which is the relentless secularization of Christian universalism.

While the nation-state has been historically compromised by both nationalism and statism, Professor Kennedy's idea of it as an essentially reactionary and clumsy relic that has (almost) outlived its time seems extreme, to say the least. In particular, his observation—arresting on first reading—that national entities are either too large or too small to handle the problems of the contemporary world is vitiated by the enormous diversity in size, strength, and reach among the 170-odd members of the United Nations. Surely many of those are comfortably in scale with their present functions and responsibilities? If nationalism has in fact been the source of great evil in this and earlier centuries, the result of appalling use and abuse of the nationalist idea, surely the answer in the next century and probably in the foreseeable future of mankind is not to attempt to replace the nation-state with some other (perhaps worse) institution, but to redefine our expectations for it in the interest of curbing its more tyrannical and aggressive tendencies.

The theme of *The Passionate Attachment: America's Involvement With Israel, 1947 to the Present* is the abuse of nationalism by over-assertion on the one hand and, on the other, by under-assertiveness. George W. Ball, an undersecretary of state in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, and his son Douglas have written a book responsibly critical of the ruthlessness with which Israel has operated from its inception and also of the supineness characteristic of the United States in its willingness to support ruthlessness in disregard of moral principle and of its own national interest. The Balls' text is Washington's Farewell Address of 1796, in which the departing President warned against "passionate attachments" to other nations, resulting in an illusion of common interest where there is none; participation in quarrels not one's own; concession of privileges not granted to others; domestic factionalism leading to the practice of "the arts of seduction," public deceit, and unwarranted influence in the "public councils"; and the stigmatization of those unwilling to serve as "tools and dupes" of a foreign power. In the opinion of the authors, Israel since 1947 has qualified as the object of such an attachment, from which every one of the consequences foreseen by President Washington has subsequently flowed.

While the United States of course is no more responsible for the holocaust than 19th-century European Jewry was for the slaughter of the American War Between the States, its support of the new state of Israel was essentially an expression of compassion for Jewish suffering at the hands of the Nazis and their collaborators. However, the American-Israeli lobby has never felt entirely secure with a policy based on mere emotion,

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and so it has preferred to emphasize instead Israel's importance to the United States as a reliable ally blocking incursions by the Soviet Union in the Middle East. With the collapse of the U.S.S.R., the end of the Cold War, and the Allied victory (to which the Israelis did not contribute) in the Gulf War, the rationale for America's paying enormous, unquestioned, and regular "tribute" to Israel no longer holds. Accordingly, the Balls propose that such tribute cease forthwith, arguing that Washington would be spared a very considerable drain on its impoverished Treasury while Israel, forced at last to be self-supportive, would benefit immeasurably from a burgeoning economy freed from statist and bureaucratic restrictions. Finally and most importantly, the United States would be acting in a principled fashion:

> In the last few decades, America has progressively redefined its moral objectives; it now puts special emphasis on the elimination of colonialism, racial and ethnic discrimination; on the advancement of human rights; and on the removal of bars to economic opportunity created by inefficient state socialism. These newly prominent values have been given such priority in American policy that their distortion by our passionate attachment to Israel casts mortal doubt on the sincerity and credibility of our leaders.

While this passage shows the Balls themselves departing from Washington's and the other Founding Fathers' belief that the safest nation and the one that makes the best neighbor is the nation that minds its own business and eschews crusades to remake other countries in its own image (that the responsibility of a nation, in other words, is to *be* a nation, no more and no less), their account of Israeli mendacity, tergiversation, duplicity, arrogance, and recalcitrance toward its chief ally, friend, and benefactor underscores what for the United States must be the secondary indictment: the documented crimes and maltreatment perpetrated on the Palestinian people, whose portion of the original Palestinian mandate Israel seized by force of arms in the war of 1948 (what Israelis call their War of Independence), and Jerusalem's absolute refusal to countenance the morally and politically justified demand for a Palestinian state. As the Balls plainly show, however, the cruelty and intransigence of Israeli generals and politicians have been equally balanced by the weakness and temerity of the American political establishment, which, with the exception of President Eisenhower who in 1956 forced Israel to withdraw her army from the territory it had seized during the Suez offensive, has talked principle to the Jerusalem government (and to the world) only to back down abjectly when its solicitations were rebuffed. As for the American people themselves, their negligence and passivity in regard to the Middle East can be excused only, as the Balls suggest, by the absence of a Doughty, a Burton, or a Lawrence from their literature and by their ignorance of Arab history and culture, which has been presented to them almost exclusively as a tale of barbarity and superstition.

It is interesting to read in the Balls' book that Israel and the United States are currently suffering from a similar social, intellectual, economic, and political rot. If the contemporary American and Israeli brands of nationalism are the only ones available at the start of the 21st century, then by all means let us discard them directly into the maw of Paul Kennedy's capacious and ever-yawning dustbin and follow the professor in his search for something new. Nations that are under- and over-assertive of their own and their people's rights are respectively like too-slow and too-fast drivers on the freeway: the cause of historical pile-ups, and international catastrophe.

On the Municipal Golf Course

by Richard Moore

Odor of ploughed-up soil drifts through the evening murk;
tonight my tax dollars are still at work,
digging sand traps beneath the trees,
where golfers pay no fees.

Forget the crumbling schools, and let us all take pity
on businessmen, the pillars of our City.
O the injustice here on earth . . .
that men of solid worth

can be impugned by poets with their puny jokes!
This shoddy little poem—what a hoax!
If I could join them—sad and wistful,
I'd grab swag by the fistful.

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Gloomy Conservatives

by Donald Devine

"A conservative is a man with two perfectly good legs who, however, has never learned to walk."
—Franklin D. Roosevelt

The Conservative Movement, Revised Edition
by Paul Gottfried
New York: Twayne Publishers; 214 pp., $26.95

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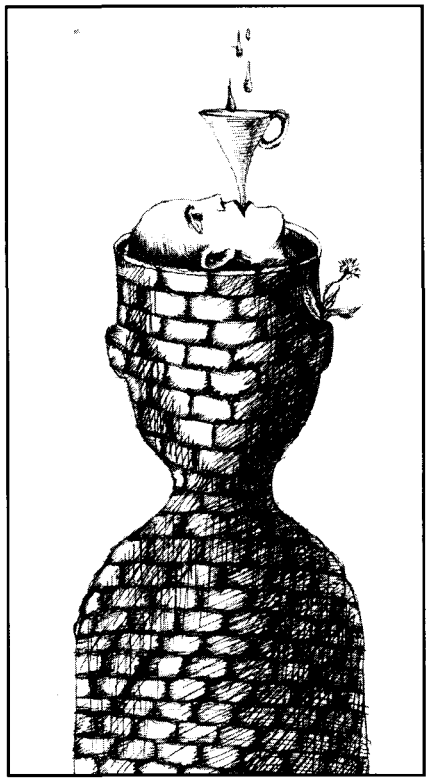
This is a very disturbing book, concluding that "America will one day be 'one with Nineveh and Tyre,'" and that the general principles of conservatism will only reappear "when circumstances favorable to civilization return." The remnant, or paleoconservatives, are "without real hope" of political or cultural power, their only function being to express "iconoclastic exuberance" over unpopular causes in a spirit "far more Nietzschean than neo-Thomistic." This gloomy conservatism is the fruit of a movement whose magnificent development (described in five brilliant chapters) was arrested and finally destroyed by a force Paul Gottfried calls "neoconservatism," whose chief concerns are for the money and power that flow from a connection with the political establishment of Washington, D.C. Gottfried's neoconservatives are not just the Democratic, Cold War liberal intellectuals who shifted right in the late 1960's; they include most of the writers for *National Review*, the staff of the Heritage Foundation, and indeed most leaders and intellectuals commonly identified as "conservative."

This revised edition of *The Conservative Movement* is actually two books. The first five chapters, following the original edition (coauthored with Thomas Fleming), display even more thorough research and still keener scholarly insight this time around. The last two chapters by Professor Gottfried alone are new, and read much more like investigative journalism than academic analysis. They are also responsible for the difference between the mild optimism of the first edition and the deep pessimism of the second.



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Early chapters describe the development of the conservative movement from its "neither organized nor coherent" origins during the New Deal through its consolidation by William F. Buckley, Jr., Frank Meyer, and *National Review* in the 50's, the Goldwater movement in the 60's, the academic conservatism of the 60's and 70's, the intellectual revolt of the neoconservatives, and the populist revolt of the New Right. Gottfried's narrative is indispensable to an understanding of conservatism, even if one can quibble with some of the details, and very useful for anyone wishing to understand the movement that culminated in the election of Ronald Reagan.

I grew up in the ferment that was "the movement" around *National Review* in the 1950's and attended St. John's University, which Professor Gottfried identifies as a center of conservative activity. After having rejected some of the strident early rhetoric of the magazine I was brought by Meyer to the fold, won by both his philosophy and his activism. Meyer's "synthesis of ideas that included absolute truths and personal liberty" seemed the right equation and did indeed become what Gottfried calls "the vital center of the conservative culture of the 1950's." While documenting the dominance of fusionism within the intellectual conservative movement, Gottfried properly chides its partisan, populist, defiant tone, its exclusionism (Meyer denounced George Wallace), its activism ("almost all of *National Review*'s staff participated in political campaigns"), and its optimistic conviction that "things could be set right."

Paul Gottfried argues convincingly that neoconservatives and others in their embrace cooperate with one another in funding projects, in getting jobs, in publishing each other's books, and in controlling institutions; he also shows some people to have made a lot of money. But the important question to ask about Washington conservatives is surely "Have they kept the principles of the movement and tried to advance them given their opportunities?" not "Have they received lucrative grants?" Detailing where they went wrong on policy is much more worthy of scholarly analysis than investigating their bank accounts.

As for the wisdom of conservatives involving themselves with the Washington policymaking community, the problem is certainly a vexed one. Do you preach truth from an ivory tower and let the country go reeling to the left, or do you try to guide it rightwards at the expense of principle? There is a great danger in the latter course, and it is possible that Washington conservatives have indeed gone too far. The Heritage Foundation, in pressing its "empowerment" theme, is often close to the line but, in my view at least, generally avoids crossing it. Still it is helpful—if not always pleasant—to have someone like Professor Gottfried around to chide us, though

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Donald Devine is a columnist and adjunct scholar at the Heritage Foundation and author of five books, most recently Reagan's Terrible Swift Sword: Reforming and Controlling the Federal Bureaucracy *(Jameson Books).*

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his strictures certainly do not justify our giving way to Nietzschean despair.

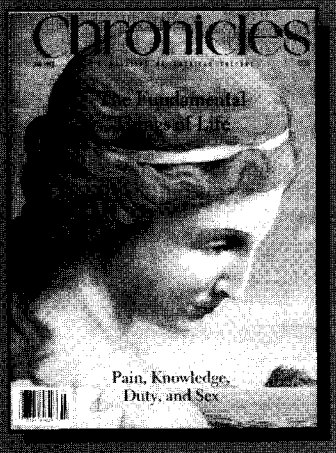
By the end of his book, Gottfried seems to mean by "neoconservatives" all optimists who call themselves conservative: if so, count me in. Earlier on, however, he suggests a better definition: neoconservatives are conservatives who "remain qualified defenders of the welfare state" and who support a "vision of a global democratic order." I suggest an operating definition of a true conservative as one who rejects the welfare state by supporting local and private institutions and judges foreign policy by whether it meets American interests—and of a neoconservative as a person who rejects only the excesses of the welfare state and argues for a make-the-world-safe-for-democracy internationalism. It seems to me that from this distinction three things follow.

The first is that the John Randolph Club "agreements," as reported in *The Conservative Movement*, will not do. "On immigration and trade policy, [libertarians and traditionalists] have united behind the principle that no policy should be adopted unless conducive to political liberty in the United States." This is simple evasion: unless policies regarding trade and immigration are going to be made by local governments, what other than the welfare state can execute them in their increasing complexity? If fusionism's simple formula of "libertarian means applied by a conservative society for traditional ends" is to be replaced, much more theoretical work is required.

The second is that a former neoconservative who accepts conservatism, however defined, should be regarded by his new associates as a "real" conservative: "neoconservative" cannot become a permanent castigation. In Gottfried's early chapters, Irving Kristol is excused from the internationalist charge. He quotes Russell Kirk's opinion that Kristol is "not a neoconservative at all . . . but a conservative." He speaks favorably of Kristol, Midge Decter, and Gertrude Himmelfarb when discussing their views on social issues. Yet, by the closing polemical chapter, all are back in the neoconservative cage, along with almost everybody else.

Kristol supports one of my two postulated conservative tenets, yet is only a qualified supporter of the second (although with less qualifications every time I read him). What to do? Excommunicate him for ideological incompleteness? Which brings me to point three: if people (including neoconservatives) tend in our direction, by all means let us welcome them and try to move them the rest of the way. I just cannot accept that neoconservatives move conservatives leftward.

Contrast the pessimism of the conclusion to the revised edition of *The Conservative Movement* with the qualified optimism with which the first edition ends: "Before giving in to anything like despair, conservatives in the 1980's [and 1990's] might take considerable comfort from contemplating their forty-year rise to power." While both the power and the comfort are today diminished, still conservatism in the 80's *did* roll back (however temporarily) the welfare state; that achievement, though insufficient, emphasizes the need for private and locally devised solutions to domestic problems and for a foreign policy based on considerations of a just national interest. Conservatives did not require foundation grants the first time around, and we will not need them the second. ©



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Roots of a New World Order

by William R. Hawkins

To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order
by Thomas J. Knock
New York: Oxford University Press; 381 pp., $30.00

◆

Though Thomas Knock draws no explicit comparisons between Woodrow Wilson's plans for a post-Great War world and the policies George Bush tried to fashion for a post-Cold War world, his use of the term "New World Order" in the title of his book is clearly meant to steer the reader to think in parallel terms: a frame of mind that could easily be carried into the new age of Bill Clinton.

Knock, an associate professor of history at Southern Methodist University, is an admirer of "the enduring relevancy of [Woodrow Wilson's] vision." This is unexpected, since Knock clearly writes from the far left of the political spectrum. But unlike other leftists—such as Arno Meyer, William Appleman Williams, Lloyd Gardner, and N. Gordon Lewis—Knock does not interpret Wilson's support of the League of Nations as a strategy to unite the Great Powers in a reactionary alliance against world revolution, or as a personal bid to steal the world stage from Lenin. Knock correctly points out that at the time, "Lenin was . . . a comparatively obscure politician at the head of a very shaky government." Had more people in the West been able to foresee what the Soviet Union would turn into, there would have been more support for Winston Churchill's desire to strangle communism in its crib. But Churchill is not even mentioned by Knock, who has a talent for writing history from the perspective of those who lived it. Knock's aim is not to discredit Wilson, but to recapture his spirit for radicals who still believe in progress and enlightenment. The value of his book is that he also reminds those on the right of the origins of many currently fashionable ideas—a refresher course that is much needed.

Knock's diplomatic history of World War I and the Versailles peace settlement amounts to a relatively small portion of the book, whose primary focus is on the development of Wilson's ideas about the proper organization of the world. Knock stresses the President's influence on such American groups as the Women's Peace Party, the American Union Against Militarism, and the Socialist Party; on the Union of Democratic Control in England; and on individuals like Jane Addams, Upton Sinclair, Norman Angell, Bertrand Russell, Oswald Garrison Villard, and John Reed.

Wilson had always been an anti-imperialist: during the Mexican Revolution, he clipped Reed's columns and circulated them. In Mexico and Latin America, Wilson favored revolutionary idealism over concrete American interests, believing the region's problems stemmed from dependence on foreign investors, including Americans. He therefore supported rebels who planned to seize those assets. He intervened at Veracruz in 1916 to block a shipment of weapons going to the counterrevolutionary Mexican government; he apologized and paid compensation to Columbia for the taking of Panama to build the canal. He criticized the Monroe Doctrine because, while checking European aggression, it failed to restrain the United States. He told a group of Mexican newspaper editors that his proposed Pan-American Pact was "an arrangement by which you would be protected from us." When the AUAM's Amos Pinchot asserted that great economic power made America a great threat to the world, Wilson agreed, "unless some check was placed upon it by some international arrangement" like a league of nations.

For Wilson, "the reactionary opponents of domestic reform and the advocates of militarism, imperialism and balance-of-power politics were born of the same womb," says Knock. In contrast, Knock argues, "Feminists, liberals, pacifists, socialists and social reformers of varying kinds, in the main, filled the ranks of the progressive internationalists. Their leaders included many of the era's authentic heroes and heroines," all of whom, as Knock shows, enjoyed easy access to Wilson's White House.

A conformity of outlook was displayed in plans drawn up by leftist groups on both sides of the Atlantic at the onset of the Great War. The basic demands were always the same and were consolidated into Wilson's Fourteen Points: disarmament; free trade; equality of nations based on self-determination; democratic governments committed to social justice; and a league of nations that would mediate disputes and perhaps punish aggression. The first two were thought to be the most important, on the assumption that arms races and commercial rivalry were the main causes of war: if the military-industrial complex could be eliminated, opposition to the rest of the program would vanish. Behind this idea lay the notion that it is only reactionary elements, not "the people," who have dangerous interests. Under democracy, there would be only peace and "world community."

A commitment to that belief is what separated the "progressive" from the "conservative" internationalists. Men like Teddy Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge, Leonard Wood, William Taft, and Elihu Root formed the League to Enforce Peace. But, says Knock, "almost all of them had been ardent imperialists and champions of Anglo-American *entente* since the 1890's," while "the LEP did not concern itself much with the economic causes of the war, with disarmament or self-determination, and certainly not with democratic control of foreign policy." What the LEP envisioned was something like traditional alliances formed to maintain a particular peace settlement, only more formal. They were mainly legalists, concerned with stability rather than social change. And "they remained committed nationalists and resisted any diminution of American sovereignty or military strength."

Senator Lodge turned against the league idea and led the fight against Wilson's impossible dream. Yet, "Lodge's arguments were not based on isolationist sentiments," Knock believes; instead, Lodge wanted "a unilateralist approach . . . which countenanced few of the restrictions on American freedom of action that Wilson's . . . league seemed to entail." In short, Lodge wanted the United States to be able to act in its own interest, and Wilson did not.

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The LEP settlement would have been imposed by the victorious Allies on the defeated Central Powers. This Wilson wanted to avoid, favoring instead a "peace without victory" negotiated between equals of their own free accord. The aims of the Allies were no better than those of the Central Powers, Wilson thought; neither war nor peace should be based on national advantage. Wilson had long hoped for a stalemate that he could mediate as a neutral. When U-boat attacks on American ships and German plots in Mexico turned American opinion in favor of war, Wilson was at pains to explain that the United States was not fighting for its own honor or security. In his famous "world safe for democracy" speech to Congress on April 2, 1917, asking for a declaration of war, he said, "We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make." The sacrifices included over 112,000 American dead, and more than twice as many wounded. A modest price compared to what the other combatants had to pay, but a stiff one for nothing in return.

The legacy of this attitude continues today, as the same politicians, academics, and journalists who opposed any use of force to defend American and Allied security during the Cold War—let alone to punish attacks on American property overseas or defend critical resources like oil—are now clamoring for armed intervention in Bosnia. The very fact that Bosnia (and places like Somalia) are of no strategic value to the United States is what makes them so attractive to liberals, if not to those who have to risk their lives or pay the bills. Teddy Roosevelt accused Wilson of being "a man who is too proud to fight" for his own country, a charge that could also be leveled at a certain former antiwar activist and draft-dodger should he choose to place more American troops at the disposal of the United Nations or to engage in other Wilsonian adventures.

William R. Hawkins is director of the Economic Security Action Center of the U.S. Business and Industrial Council.

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So Late the Day

by Clyde Wilson

Whistling in the Dark: True Stories and Other Fables
by George Garrett
New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; 225 pp., $19.95

◆

Poetry, short story, novel, drama, screenplay, criticism, the teaching of writing: George Garrett has excelled across the entire spectrum of literary art. I can call to mind no other contemporary American writer who approaches this feat, though perhaps Garrett's friend Fred Chappell comes closest. But, what is even rarer for a first-rank artist, Garrett also excels in the essay, in the explicit and direct examination of the world.

As the American novel became more and more solipsist in style and trivial in subject matter, Garrett went in the opposite direction. If he had stopped writing at 40 (more than 20 years ago) he would already have had an enduring space in the poetry and fiction anthologies. But rather than coast along comfortably repeating himself, Garrett leapt new and higher barriers, producing the stunning and unexpected achievement of his Elizabethan novels: *Death of the Fox* (1971), *The Succession: A Novel of Elizabeth and James* (1983), and *Entered From the Sun* (1990).

In so doing Garrett brought to life a critically formative period of the world we live in, and did so in a way that was audacious in technique, intensely modern in consciousness, and profoundly traditional in values. He demonstrated also that it was still possible for an American writer (or at any rate an American Southern writer) to make creative contact with the pristine and vigorous English language, the authentic religion, and the terrible contingency and ambiguity of human life that marked Shakespeare's England. And since out of Shakespeare's England was founded Virginia, the Restoration was a part of American history as well.

More recently Garrett the essayist has taken for his field contemporary American life and letters. So along with two collections of literary comment—*My Silk Purse and Yours* and *The Sorrows of Fat City*—he has provided us with a sort of memoir, *Whistling in the Dark*, which allows us to begin to understand something of where his great books came from. Of course, art of this stature comes from God—the original and root meaning of inspiration—but we still need to understand the human and historical means by which the divine plan was worked out in the writer George Garrett.

This is not a book about literature per se and certainly not a sordid and self-serving account of cash advances gained, prizes won, celebrities met. When Garrett writes about literature he does one of three things: tells a good story; gives generous praise where it is deserved, especially to the under-rewarded (and no writer is more generous to his contemporaries); or gets in a couple of quick devastating punches to the solar plexus of overrated Northeastern literary celebrities.

Whistling in the Dark is a collection of the meditated experiences that made the writer. For instance, we learn how the "selfish intensity" of his youthful conditioning as boxer and footballer helped to shape a literary career and point of view. And we see Garrett the young soldier in the heart of Europe in the intense early days of the Cold War, standing in a weeping crowd of Austrians to greet a trainload of broken POWs returning from Russian captivity years after the war is over. "I stand there knowing one thing for certain—that I am seeing our century, our time, close and truly."

The recollections flow from a Southern sense of family as the essential unit of society. So that Garrett's Confederate great-grandfather is an integral part of his experience, along with all the generations in between and now—a proliferating connection centered in old hard-scrabble prewar Florida. In Southern life there are no alienated individuals; there are families living, for better or

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worse, in real time and place. Therefore, American history is not a reservoir of officially approved slogans and abstract propositions, but a living experience. For this reason Garrett can in three-and-a-half pages say more that is original, true, and significant about the Civil War than any number of pompous pseudo-intellectuals in 15 hours of government-subsidized TV.

The writer who emerges from this rich context is not the logistical manager of a career; he is a child of history and a part of it. If we are going to have cultural relativism, Garrett observes, let's really have it. Let's forgive other generations for the sin of not being like us, as well as other cultures:

> Much was probably wrong with old America . . . and eager historians are busy telling us as much about their sins and follies as they can find out or imagine. But somehow . . . the old Americans created the place and above all the climate of social hope and political liberty. . . . This was their intention. This was their triumph. It cannot be revised away by anyone except a liar.

And it must be forgiven by anyone who is a Christian. After all, they were our people.

Garrett's view of the world is tough, irreverent, and unillusioned. Yet we find, at bottom, not the cheap nihilistic despair of contemporary fiction but a lean residue of belief in the essential realities of faith, hope, courage, truth, and love. It is a perfect expression of Richard Weaver's "sentiment not sentimentality." One of Garrett's Elizabethan characters comments that the most heroic action he ever saw was that of a man on his way to the gallows who cursed his wife and children and kicked his dog.

So we find in the works of Garrett the consciousness that marks Christian civilization still alive in high art and in a time of troubles and a century of horrors. From this we can take some hope, though not fatuous optimism. As Garrett writes, after looking over the photo images of our Civil War forebears:

> Something has happened to the American face. . . . Somehow the standard-issue American face has changed over from its apparent material of cut stone, poured bronze, or whittled hardwood into something else, something much like molded plastic or (on a bad day) Silly Putty. And smiling. Almost always smiling.

This mingling of artistic imagination and empirical observation, which penetrates at once to the heart of matters, is what we have come to expect from our most consummate man of letters in this late day.

Clyde Wilson is a professor of American history at the University of South Carolina and the editor of The Papers of John C. Calhoun.

The State of the Art

by J.O. Tate

Revelation and Other Fiction From the Sewanee Review: A Centennial Anthology
Edited by George Core
Louisville: Harmony House; 304 pp., $24.95

◆

This volume of short stories seems to me to represent, as a book, two distinct levels of meaning. The first and most insistent of these levels is of course as a diverse gathering of brilliant fictions, each one a self-justifying experience. The variety of voices and subjects is itself refreshing and rewarding; the high standard of excellence suggests that the inclusion of each story was a judgment made by an informed and discriminating intelligence.

The multiple juxtapositions strike many sparks, but before I remark on some of those specific flashes of illumination, I want to point to a second but no means negligible level of meaning implied by this anthology. I refer specifically to *Revelation* as a centennial anthology and to the literary tradition or association that is celebrated by this gathering of stories. The volume is a part of the centennial of the *Sewanee Review* that was observed last fall, and more. It commemorates the superb fiction that has been published by the review for five decades, since Andrew Lytle and the late Allen Tate began there in the 1940's. John Palmer continued the practice, as did Monroe Spears in the 1950's. Andrew Lytle maintained the standard he himself had set during his second editorship, from 1961 to 1973. Since then, George Core has, to say the least, maintained the tradition for 20 more years.

In this context, we must be reminded of Andrew Lytle's anthology of 1971, *Craft and Vision*, which, like George Core's, contains 17 works from the *Sewanee Review*. I hasten to say that these collections have only one story in common, Andrew Lytle's "The Guide," or as he called it later, "The Mahogany Frame." There are some writers in common here, naturally enough: Eudora Welty, Peter Taylor, Flannery O'Connor, and Madison Jones are four of the best in the history of American literature and are represented as they should or even must be—though not by the same stories.

Back in 1971, Mr. Lytle included works by William Faulkner, Caroline Gordon, and Robert Penn Warren, for obvious reasons. But now George Core, while not scanting the past, has chosen more contemporary works from perhaps a wider range of writers, reflecting his own editorial presence. Reading Andrew Lytle's 1971 foreword, I find many of the distinctions he made then to be still valid for the editor of this distinguished literary quarterly but also still unheeded by a nation that seems preoccupied with bad fiction, worse movies, aesthetic quota systems, and artistic set-asides. Lytle declared, "The stories are written out of a conscious use of the craft. As widely different as are the subjects and styles, this fiction represents the oldest tradition in the world, the perpetual understanding of the human predicament and the sense that it can only be imparted formally. . . . In the end the sudden discovery of form and subject conjoined is a mystery. It is instantaneous; and nobody, including the author, takes in quite how the two fuse and thus allow the drama to unfold." What he said then still goes. And that what Mr. Lytle called "an excellence which will sustain this magazine's tradition . . . this formal sense of craftsmanship" is still a vital criterion at *Sewanee*, as George Core has made perfectly clear.

There is a sense of tradition, then, in Core's anthology, not only in the excellence that we now come to expect, but also in the presence of artistic connec-

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tions. Flannery O'Connor, Walter Sullivan, Madison Jones, and Merrill Joan Gerber, for instance, all studied the craft of fiction with Andrew Lytle. Eudora Welty and Peter Taylor have known him for a long time and share a certain collegiality with him. Other writers belong to other regions, perhaps, or have modulated their tones in different ways, or have opened their stories to different realms of experience, but they still adhere to the demands of excellence as George Core has defined them: "[E]ach has the constituents of strong fiction: a compelling story, a credible action and an inevitable plot, character expressed and exposed (as Henry James would say), sharp detail and acute description properly subordinated to action and plot. The engine driving the plot and revealing its causality as the action unfolds is the story itself, what James calls the 'irresistible determinant,' 'the prime and precious thing'—the element providing the fundamental energy and combustion for the fictive occasion. That ingredient I particularly commend to you."

He has commended to us the stories in this volume as well. In recommending them, I would like to confine myself here to certain remarks that I have meant to apply broadly to this volume as well as to particular writers. I have found Flannery O'Connor's "Revelation" to take on a new resonance in this context. Walter Sullivan's "Elizabeth" seems to share with O'Connor's story a sense of mystery, and Madison Jones's "Zoo" a quality of serious fun that suggests a commonality that is not only literary but regional and even spiritual.

George Core's own declaration effectively dramatizes what I have merely attempted to indicate: "I would put this selection of stories up against any other without the slightest embarrassment or even a trace of defensiveness, arguing that it is better than any comparable anthology published during the last decade and more. What I especially savor as a reader is the richness and diversity these stories offer." Barry Targan's "Kingdoms" proves his point about the diversity, for that effective work is open and free in form compared with some of the more traditionally shaped ones. As for the rest of his claim, the editor of *Revelation* gets no argument from me.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

Goodbye, Columbus

by Gregory McNamee

Dead Voices: Natural Agonies in the New World
by Gerald Vizenor
Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press; 144 pp., $17.95

◆

Gerald Vizenor intends in his fictions to pay due homage to Coyote, the American Indian trickster figure, through twist-and-turn narrative high jinks. He has often been successful, notably in the rollicking novel *Griever: An American Monkey King in China*, a comic masterwork in which a visiting Native American scholar sets a nation of a billion citizens on its ear, while Mao spins in his grave and Coyote howls. *Dead Voices* is more academic and nowhere as successful. Its form is taken from *wanaki*, an Indian card game that resembles tarot, except that its players are transformed into the characters they turn up: bears, owls, lice, and so on. The conceit is familiar enough: Italo Calvino and Umberto Eco played with novel-as-card-game structures for years, and they barely missed the preciousness that overly intellectualized plots often degenerate into.

In *Dead Voices*, a professor at the University of California (like Vizenor himself) meets an urban shaman named Bagese Bear, who wanders the streets of Oakland dispensing advice and consulting with passing birds. Fascinated, the narrator asks Bagese to teach him the art of communicating with animals. Bagese takes him to her apartment, turns up the first card, and off they go down a tortuous trail that involves transparent symbolism, awful punning, literary allusion (our shaman quotes the work of Elias Canetti, the Bulgarian writer-philosopher), parodies of American Indian oral narratives, and more than one instance of downright dull lecturing. Vizenor wants us to understand that American Indians inhabited an idyllic universe until the arrival of the Europeans, who ruined the continent with "loans, sewing machines, metal bundles, engines, and steering wheels." It's a fair enough charge, I suppose, but after the Columbian quincentenary and its accompanying rantings, it's hardly unfamiliar.

All Europeans and their descendants (whom Vizenor calls "wordies") are, in his view, corrupt. And all Native Americans are intrinsically good, if now dislocated and powerless in the new world of reservations and rat-infested urban ghettoes: "The land was discovered by those who were dead in the heart and unforgiven. The tribes were scarred with inventions, and our stories were removed with the animals. Our voices ended on a schedule of civilization, and the war ended in translation." Regrettably, Vizenor too often sinks to the sort of *ad hominem* and *ad captandum* argumentation that George Orwell so devastatingly parodied in *Animal Farm* ("four legs good, two legs bad"); the idea, I suppose, is to make all Anglos feel personally responsible for the crimes of their fathers.

Vizenor is capable of great subtlety and humor—as I said, *Griever* is a howlingly funny book and a real pleasure to read—but the heavy-handedness of his approach often makes *Dead Voices* a chore. Because his characters are symbols in a morality play, figures who never come alive, the title of his novel is entirely apt. In fact, considered alongside Leslie Silko's remarkable *Almanac of the Dead*, in which the narrator prophesies a continent-wide Indian uprising and the forced removal of whites from the Americas, Vizenor's criticism seems flat.

The book has its moments, however. The second chapter, "Bears," nicely depicts the shamanic metamorphosis of man into grizzly and imagines an America of picket-fence suburbs inhabited by marauding ursines who keep the locals honest. (Vizenor's call for a salmon stream behind every well-groomed cul-de-sac has a certain appeal, too.) And Vizenor, finally slipping into Coyote's skin, pulls off a good joke when his characters transform themselves into fleas and bring down an exterminator or two, transferring a touch of the Little Big Horn to the Bay Area.

But the good points don't quite add up to a good novel. In preaching to the choir while the rest of the congregation slumbers, Gerald Vizenor has turned a potentially fine novel into an exclusionary sermon. Reliant on formula and innuendo, *Dead Voices* fails to live up to his great promise.

Gregory McNamee's most recent book is Named in Stone and Sky: An Arizona Anthology *(University of Arizona Press).*

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Letter From Moscow

by Robert C. Whitten

Change and Its Consequences

◆

Last October I journeyed to Moscow by invitation for a conference on conversion from military to civilian production. Upon arrival, my colleague, Professor Constantine Danopoulos of the political science department at San Jose State University, and I were informed that the meeting had been shifted to December to coincide with the Congress of the Supreme Soviet. Rescheduling and canceling without warning are typical Russian failings that they must somehow overcome if they are to bring in Western investment.

The question was what to do in Moscow in what proved to be a week of early winter, indeed the earliest winter in 20 years. Our contact, Vladimir, was resourceful—he is something of a "wheeler-dealer"—and we had a most interesting meeting with Father Gleb Yakunin and two Russian Army colonels, Colonel Mikhail Kuznetsov and Lieutenant Colonel (Colonel-select) Boris Lukichev. Vladimir speaks excellent English and proved to be an able translator. (I assume that he was honest and accurate. Even today, one is wise to be at least a little suspicious.)

First we took the Metro from our lodgings at the Gorbachev Foundation to Red Square and the GUM state department store. It was strange to see the white, blue, and red flag of the czars flying over the Kremlin on that chilly, overcast morning. The last time I was there, in early June 1970, the hammer and sickle were firmly ensconced, seemingly forever. GUM, which lies on the other side of Red Square, was then something out of the 19th century. Although it still is to a considerable extent primitive, the modern vies with the antique. For example, PlayMobil toys, German stereos and camcorders, and Italian shoes are sold (for hard currency only) right next door to Russian shops selling Matryushka dolls (stacked dolls-within-dolls). Before returning to the hotel to meet Vladimir, we took the Metro to Dzerzhinsky Square, or rather Lubyanka Square as it is now called. Before the coup attempt, a gigantic statue of "Iron Felix" stood in the center of the square opposite the infamous Lubyanka, headquarters of an insurance company before the revolution and later headquarters of the Cheka/KGB. It was pulled down and destroyed at the time of the coup and replaced with a crude cross.

Father Gleb (Russian Orthodox) had been a dissident who was quite independent of the KGB and who spent years in the labor camps for his vocal opposition and religious practices. A man of striking appearance and presence, he is now a people's deputy in Parliament and an important figure in "military reform." Although he did not mention it, Father Yakunin had just returned from a conference convened in Washington by the Institute on Religion and Democracy—"More Than Just a Constitution: The Future of Democracy in Russia and America"—where he had received the IRD's 1992 Religious Freedom Award. Our meeting took place in Father Yakunin's office in the Russian White House, the Parliament building that served as Boris Yeltsin's redoubt during the aborted coup of August 1991. From an upper-story window our hosts showed us the scene of Yeltsin's standoff with the tanks. The window also overlooks the ill-fated American Embassy building, riddled with KGB "bugs," whose security design earned a State Department official an award.

Upon entering the Parliament building, we immediately spotted life-size paintings of the Russian czars, which only recently had replaced similar paintings of Bolsheviks and communist party apparatchiks. Our Russian hosts, who repeatedly referred to the "spiritual rebirth of the Russian Armed Forces," were mainly interested in two aspects of military reform: civilian control of the armed forces and the creation of a military chaplain corps to replace the old political commissar system. Colonel Lukichev cited the results of a recent poll which indicated that about 10 percent of the officer corps is *strongly* religious and that about 25 percent is religious, but not as strongly. About five percent are atheists. Colonel Kuznetsov challenged these figures, claiming that as much as 35 percent is strongly religious, but he did not tell us how he arrived at his numbers. In any case, the Russian Army seems on the way to establishing a chaplain corps with genuine religious freedom for Baptists, Catholics, Muslims, etc., as well as for Orthodox Christians. In the course of conversation I suggested that they might wish to consult Cardinal John J. O'Connor about their proposed chaplain corps, since he has served both as U.S. Navy Chief of Chaplains (as far as I know the only admiral ever to become a cardinal) and as a military vicar of the Roman Catholic Church. The Russians were interested, and so I pursued the matter after returning home. I ultimately spoke to the senior chaplain on the Joint Staff at the Pentagon who informed me that, yes, conversations with the Russians about forming a chaplain corps had taken place.

The conversation on civilian control of the armed forces proved to be more nebulous, I suppose because of the nature of the subject. A retired U.S. Marine Corps colonel who was also present cited the example of George Washington's refusal to have anything to do with military rule as an important precedent in the American subjection of the military to civilian control. Colonel Kuznetsov also cited the brutal hazing to which Soviet Army recruits have long been subjected. It turned out that his son had been drafted into the Russian Army, and he was concerned for his son's safety. The meeting ended in the coffee shop of the White House where Father Gleb served us tea or coffee and the Russian version of "crumpets." It is hard to find people more friendly than the Russians, and I was saddened to leave the meeting.

That evening Danopoulos and I were invited to the home of one of his Moscow friends, an Armenian editor, Vagan. His wife, an attractive and intelligent Ukrainian, had prepared some delicious salmon, which must have cost them a great deal. Their apartment, which they own, would be considered small in America but is decidedly plush by Russian standards. During the course of dinner Vagan was called away to the telephone. While he was gone, his wife proceeded to tell us what atrocious hus-

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bands Russian men are. Her first husband, a Russian, was unable to stay away from the bottle. Whether he beat her, too, was unclear, since her ability to converse in English was somewhat limited. She did say that her Armenian husband, like most Armenian men, is a workaholic.

The next evening Vladimir took us to an Uzbek restaurant, which turned out to be a hangout of the Moscow Mafia. Indeed, some of the denizens were caricatures of the Sicilian/American Mafia of the 1920's, complete with dark hats pulled down over their eyes. After a delicious (for Moscow) dinner with wines and the inevitable vodka, a "girly show" began—risqué for the Russians, although quite tame by American standards. The act included a magician who called me to assist him. I could not quite follow what he did, especially after the wine and vodka, but it was impressive. When the show ended the girls came down onto the floor and joined some of the (Mafiosi-occupied) tables, evidently the customary practice.

Danopolous and I met with a retired general (Major General Nikita Chaldymov) who now heads a school, the Humanitarian Academy of the Armed Forces, charged with teaching and applying the "social sciences" in the armed forces. He was the principal organizer of a meeting in November 1991 entitled "The Armed Forces and Military Service in a Democratic State," to which I had been invited. I could not attend because I was unable to get confirmation until the price of the airline ticket had escalated by $1,000. Again, a typical Russian failing. The school, formerly the Lenin Academy of the Armed Forces, was a training ground for political officers before the coup. Now it is geared toward the social sciences—sociology, psychology, and economics—as they apply to the military. Chaldymov emphasized the necessity to "departicize" the armed forces. We replied, "Oh, you mean depoliticize." "No," the general said, "We do not want to depoliticize because the army must always be the servant of the state." On that note we agreed—just a matter of semantics—and departed. I noticed the reception hall more upon leaving than entering; it was entirely empty. Not a single display or artifact was in place. Danopoulos, who had been there the year before, told me that the room was then still full of Party propaganda displays.

We did most of our traveling about the city on the Metro, one of the most outstanding municipal transportation systems in the world. Although neither Danopoulos nor I speak Russian, a mere knowledge of the Cyrillic alphabet is sufficient to navigate the system. Much of it deep underground for security purposes, it is one of the legacies of Stalin in much the same way that the German Autobahn system is a legacy of Hitler. The stations are kept clean, and the tile work is in reasonably (for Russian) good condition. Moreover, they are safe, which cannot always be said for many parts of present-day Moscow. The cars are also clean and modern for the most part, and they arrive every few minutes—almost no wait. A warning for the traveler, however: many of the stops have been renamed since the failed August 1991 coup; heroes of the "Great October Revolution" are out, traditional Russian names are in. One of the most impressive pastimes of the people is their reading while riding or waiting. And not *National Enquirer* material, either. The Russians have always had a reputation as a nation of readers, which brings up quite a paradox. While the United States, the world's technological leader, is almost a nation of illiterates, Russia, technologically backward in Third World magnitude, is highly literate.

Vladimir arranged a city tour for Danopoulos and me on Friday, the day before we left. Inevitably, we went to the Kremlin and its museum and cathedral. My wife and I had seen it in 1970, and as well as I can recall it has physically remained the same. The cathedral's purpose, however, has changed, since it is occasionally used as a functioning church now that official atheism is dead. Our guide Vera, though an Uzbek, is a devout Orthodox Christian. This was evident in the reverence with which she treated the religious vestments and artifacts on display. Like many other non-Russians in Moscow, she appeared to harbor worries about Russian nationalism. She kept reassuring us and herself that being a citizen of Russia and a longtime resident of Moscow she had nothing to worry about. Nevertheless, she *was* worried.

What will happen to this unhappy country? Russia's problems are so immense, and it has so little corporate knowledge of how to deal with them. By comparison, ours pale into insignificance. Yet the fate of Russia and of the other former Soviet republics affects us profoundly. As one wag has put it, thousands of books have been written on how to transform a capitalist system into a socialist system, but not one has been written on how to reverse the process.

Robert C. Whitten is a retired physicist with NASA and a Commander, Reserve-Retired, with the U.S.

LIBERAL ARTS

THE MOMMY PARTY

The recently formed National Party of Hungarian Mothers is calling for state recognition of motherhood as a full-time job. The party argues that the state should pay mothers the minimum wage per child through age ten. With unemployment in Hungary at 13 percent, it says husbands need jobs that pay enough to support their families and that wives should be able to stay at home.

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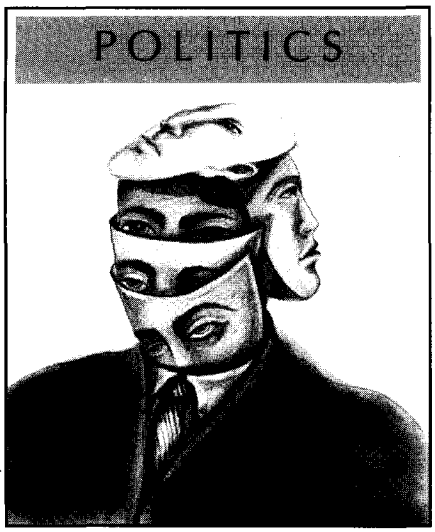

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Europe's Other Terrorists

by Philip Jenkins

The Croatian Network

The recent attack on New York City's World Trade Center has once again reinforced in Western minds that terrorism is a purely Middle Eastern phenomenon, and that terms like "Palestinian," "Shi'ite," and "Muslim fundamentalist" are virtual synonyms for "terrorist." There is no room here to discuss the damage that such a view has had on American Middle East policy over the years, but it is beyond doubt that this selective interpretation has led most media and government sources to ignore many quite deadly terrorist movements that do not fit the Arab/Iranian mold. Only thus can we explain the ludicrous (if often heard) question "Can terrorism come to the United States?" when this nation has for 30 years been rife with all manner of terrorist activities, committed by white leftists and anti-Castro Cubans, Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi groups, black militants and Puerto Rican nationalists. Throughout the Western world, many of the most lethal and persistent campaigns of international terrorism have been carried on for decades by groups of which the American public seems quite unaware. Such groups can also have an importance far beyond their numbers, when they do so much to shape attitudes toward the domestic and international conflicts in which the United States has a powerful interest.

Among the "other" terrorist groups that have earned little celebrity in comparison with the Palestinians, perhaps the most significant are the Croatian networks, which have been active in most Western countries for decades and which have carried out some of the most daring and ruthless attacks. How many Americans recall that during the 1970's Croat terrorists carried out attacks on American soil that resulted in even heavier casualties than the carnage at the World Trade Center? Since the 1930's, Croat paramilitary groups have constantly demonstrated an implacable hatred toward the former Yugoslav state, and more recently toward its Serbian-dominated successor, and they have shown little compunction about expressing this hatred through armed violence.

It is essential to understand this history if we are to appreciate the ongoing civil wars in the former Yugoslav republics. These conflicts are frequently blamed on the attitudes and ambitions of the Serbian people, but we cannot understand these concerns without reference to the perceived (and quite plausible) external threat posed by Croat militias and terrorist groups. For the Serbs, the Croats represent yet another chapter in a long history in which the mere survival of the Serbian people seemed at stake, and in which no outside force could be found to prevent recurrent attempts at genocide—physical and cultural. In such a context, it is inevitable that the Serbs draw such grim lessons from their history, that they place such a premium on armed self-reliance, on taking vigorous and active defensive measures, and above all, that they wish to insure that never again will the Serbian people be placed at the mercy of those who hate them. There is an obvious (if unpopular) analogy here to the attitudes that have shaped the modern state of Israel; in this model, the Croat terrorists thoroughly fulfill the demon role played by the Palestinian guerrilla groups for the Jewish state.

As in the case of the Palestinians, we must not suggest that all actions or propaganda undertaken in the Croat nationalist cause be labeled simply as "terrorism." However, the terrorist strand in that tradition can be traced to the very origins of modern Croat nationalism, with the decision to undertake armed resistance to the Yugoslav regime in the late 1920's. Ustashi ("insurgent") groups sprang up rapidly with the vigorous encouragement of foreign intelligence agencies, especially those of fascist Italy and dictatorial Hungary, representing perhaps the earliest example of the state sponsorship of terrorist campaigns. (It was also at this time that Italian intelligence sponsored the first armed guerrilla groups among the Palestinian people.) During the next decade, Croat nationalist groups undertook numerous armed attacks, bombings, and assassinations against Yugoslav targets, culminating in 1934 with the murder in Marseilles of the Yugoslav King Alexander and the French Foreign Minister Jean Louis Barthou. The actual attack was carried out by a Macedonian guerrilla, but he was clearly "on loan" at the time to the Ustashi, who were—as was so often the case—executing the will of Mussolini's fascists.

The Croat extremists reached the apex of their power following the Axis occupation of Yugoslavia in 1941, and the Germans established a puppet Croat state under its own indigenous *Führer*, in the form of Ustashi leader Ante Pavelic. It is well known that the new Croatia made every effort to carry out German plans by pursuing enthusiastically anti-Semitic policies. To their everlasting credit, many Italian soldiers and diplomats showed incredible courage in attempting to protect Jews in the hands of the Croat fascists, but countless lives were lost. The Croat state also massacred hundreds of thousands of Serbs, stirring national antagonisms that survive vigorously to the present day.

The Allied victory in 1945 left the Croat leadership in disarray. Some surrendered to the Western Allies, only to be handed back to the Yugoslav communist authorities for summary justice.

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Others sought help in the "rat line" operated by the Vatican and found exile in those countries that had shown some sympathy to the Axis, notably in Spain and Latin America: Pavelic himself became part of this diaspora, fleeing to Peron's Argentina. In such congenial settings, Croat leaders formed alliances with other like-minded victims of the collapse of fascism. The Croats, like the exiled Ukrainians, Romanian Iron Guardists, and others, were encouraged to maintain their political and intelligence networks in alliance with Western governments, who were anxious to find potential foot-soldiers for the Cold War confrontation with European communism. The various émigré groups found an international focus in the World Anti-Communist League, an extreme right-wing coalition formed by the unholy marriage of European "captive nations" and Asian irredentists, largely drawn from South Korea and Taiwan. In addition, the Croat nationalists portrayed themselves as Catholic victims of communist persecution, a stance that helps to explain the sympathy their cause has attracted from the American right, most vociferously in the Reagan years.

These postwar events go far toward explaining the highly successful recrudescence of Croat nationalist and paramilitary groups in the 1970's, when a new generation of militants was galvanized by the upsurge of nationalist and democratic radicalism following the continent-wide "events" of 1968. The new militants were able to capitalize on the "anti-Bolshevik" alliances formed by their parents, and Croat military groups emerged after 1971 as part of the new "Black International," the fascist-tinged network of groups that found inspiration in Franco's Spain, Peron's Argentina, Stroessner's Paraguay, and Colonel George Papadopoulos's Greece. There arose a bewildering proliferation of militant groups such as the United Croats of West Germany, the Croatian Revolutionary Brotherhood (HRB), and the Croatian Liberation Movement (HOP)—HOP, in fact, was led by Stejpan Hefer, a wartime aide to Pavelic. Even the Ustashi name reappeared sporadically.

All the groups sought to appeal to the moral and financial sympathy of ethnic Croatians in North America, Western Europe, and Australia. Today, there are perhaps a quarter of a million ethnic Croatians living outside their homeland, and many have prospered sufficiently to be able to give generously to "patriotic" causes. In addition, Croat guerrillas reaped rich rewards for services rendered to various clandestine agencies, and they served as mercenaries for right-wing causes around the globe.

The resort to armed struggle was exemplified by events in a dozen countries, above all in Western Europe. In 1971, for example, the Yugoslav consulate in Milan was bombed: significantly, the action occurred in one of the heartlands of the "Black"-oriented Italian groups. Shortly afterwards, 27 civilians perished in the bombing of a Yugoslav airliner over Czechoslovakia, and a Swedish airliner was hijacked. Croat extremists assassinated the Yugoslav ambassador to Sweden, and Croat activity would long be significant in this country. In 1986, it was hypothesized that Croat militants might have carried out the still unexplained murder of Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, perhaps acting under orders from the Chilean or Paraguayan regime.

In 1972, a Balkan "Bay of Pigs" occurred when 19 guerrillas launched a comic-opera "invasion" of Yugoslavia itself. The incident drew particular attention to Croat activities in Australia, where the operation had been planned. The militants there go under the name of the "Croatian Brotherhood," and through the 1980's they were regarded as the group most likely to pose a domestic terrorist threat to Australia itself. In 1978, 13 men were arrested for carrying out paramilitary training intended to lead to the commission of terrorist attacks within Yugoslavia. The following year, Australian intelligence disrupted a plot to carry out bombings and assassinations.

In the United States, the most active group was the "Croatian Freedom Fighters," CFF, whose most-celebrated act involved the 1976 hijacking of a TWA flight en route from New York City to Chicago. The flight was diverted to Montreal, and thence to London and Paris. The crew and 63 passengers were freed after statements supporting Croatian independence were published in leading American newspapers. This affair ended relatively bloodlessly, but other aspects of the CFF campaign were more lethal. One of the CFF activists linked to the hijacking was also said to be involved in planting a bomb that killed a New York City bomb disposal expert. Croat groups also carried out sporadic bombings through the early 1980's, including an attack on a court building in Lower Manhattan and multiple attacks against the United Nations building, probably the world's single most tempting terrorist target. Other actions included the kidnapping of a German consul in Chicago.

Much more seriously, there is now a consensus that Croat groups were guilty of the 1975 bombing at New York City's La Guardia Airport, which led to 11 deaths. In terms of casualties, this crime remains the single most serious act of terrorism on American soil in modern times; the lack of outcry against the Croat extremists perhaps results from the long period that ensued before American authorities were able to assign blame. Interestingly, the La Guardia attack is rarely referred to in recent works on terrorism directed against the United States, and it seems almost to have slipped from public memory.

Croat terrorist campaigns were at their height between about 1972 and 1984, but they have since gone into decline. However, it is uncertain whether this is due to better counterterrorist policies by Western nations or to a deliberate decision by the militants to focus their efforts on the fragmenting Yugoslav republic. Whatever the reason, Croat international terrorism now appears moribund; but the heritage of these violent activities is a lively and indeed pressing issue. In the late 1980's, a new Croat nation emerged from the wreckage of the old federation, and Croatia attracted widespread international support both for the justice of its cause and for its underdog status in the face of Serbian military assaults. However, Serbian hostility can only be understood in light of the Ustashi atrocities of the 1940's and the suggestion that the contemporary Croat nation is a lineal successor to the Pavelic regime.

Of course, postwar Croat nationalists have sought to disassociate themselves from this bloody past, and they bitterly resent the Ustashi label, which is applied freely by the Yugoslav government, but their subsequent actions have made such a link plausible. In the late 1980's, the new Croat government headed by Franjo Tudjman made a point of celebrating April 10 as Croatian Independence Day, and thus as a noble and laudable day in Croat history. The date commemorates the Axis victory over Yugoslavia in 1941

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and the founding of the Pavelic puppet state. The Croat regime also tried to rehabilitate the memory of some of the nationalist leaders most associated with those ghastly years. The record of Croat terrorism therefore goes far in explaining Serbian reluctance to permit any of their people to live under Croat rule, and the desperate necessity to redraw frontiers accordingly. This is the paramount explanation for the horrors of "ethnic cleansing."

The Croat experience also suggests a point that should never be forgotten in political debate over American intervention in any of Europe's burgeoning ethnic struggles. Terrorism is a tactic, not a movement, and it is likely to spring from any situation in which a group or party finds itself in a sufficiently desperate plight, seeing no legitimate way to express its grievances. In the 1990's, therefore, we are all too likely to see terrorist campaigns launched by any one of a dozen nations that believes its existence is at stake, ranging from Montenegrins and Bosnians to Armenians and (perhaps most likely) ethnic Hungarians. The nations that once were known as the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Romania might therefore provide a base for international terrorism quite comparable to the Palestinian experience of the 1970's.

In the case of the Yugoslav peoples, the Croat campaigns have left in place a network of arms, safe-houses, and funding, all merely waiting for the appropriate circumstances to reactivate the old military groups. In the event of a full-scale military confrontation between Serbia and Croatia, it is more than likely that the bloodshed will spill over into other countries, with the United States and Australia as likely to be affected as any European nation. And once Croat clandestine forces are in play, it is quite certain that the Serbs will respond in kind. Throughout the 1970's, there were repeated charges that Yugoslav foreign intelligence (UDBA) was seeking to control the terrorist threat by assassinating Croat leaders in the nations in which they sought refuge, including the United States. Presumably, Serbian agents have now inherited most of the old UDBA networks. In the 1990's, the ethnic wars of Eastern and Balkan Europe might well be fought out in the streets of Frankfurt and Sydney, Chicago and New York. This prospect should be considered very carefully by any government considering involvement or even armed intervention in the political morass of that region.

Obviously, the Croats are by no means the only villains of the Yugoslav disaster. There are rights and wrongs on both sides, though for some reason information about Serbian rights and Croat wrongs seems slow to penetrate to the outside world.

Philip Jenkins is a professor in the Administration of Justice Department at Pennsylvania State University.

Is This America, or What?

by Clinton W. Trowbridge

A Defense of Dwarf-Tossing

We don't weigh much: maybe 40, 50 pounds. We're light compared to you. And that's how it all got started. Some big guy got mad at Joey LaRoy down at MacNab's Bar and Grill. He picked him up—to shake him, that's all; but Joey bit him on the nose, and the guy threw him clear across the room—the way you would a cat. Joey bounced off the wall, which was 20 feet away, on the opposite side of two tables (fortunately unoccupied at the time). He got up and shook himself and started back for more. But another big mick named O'Malley grabbed him, yelled out, "Here ya go, Paddy," and threw him back toward the bar; right away everybody's grabbing us dwarfs and throwing us around. Considering that MacNab's is a favorite hangout of ours, it's actually amazing this never happened before.

It didn't last long. Maybe five minutes. MacNab brought it to a halt by setting everybody up with free beers, but it couldn't have lasted much longer anyway. Even stevedores can't throw us around forever. The thing is, we all were just having a good time, all but Joey. And so we knew, right away, that we were on to something big. And we were. The whole dwarf-throwing thing started that night at MacNab's Bar and Grill on Water Street: May 8, 1987. Three years it lasted, a little more. Most of us got rich.

First thing we did was join the Teamsters. That was my work. I was the rep. They got us helmets, body padding, six-inch-thick mattresses on the floor, four-inch-thick ones on the walls, harnesses, padded skateboards, overtime, double pay for after hours, insurance. Together we made up a book of rules. 'Cause, you see, right away we were in big demand. Within six months we were chartering our own planes. There were special events, tournaments, stars. We didn't think anything of flying to the Coast or Chicago twice a week. It was night work, you see. Sleep a few hours, then get on the plane for Frisco, New York. Sure it was exhausting, but look how we were hauling it in. A thousand or more dollars in one night, not counting the overtime. It got so big that old guys were coming out of retirement, working a couple hours a week and making so much they had to take it under the table so as not to lose their Social Security. Even the midgets tried to muscle in.

It wasn't the IRS but a bleeding heart from Rochester who did us in. This guy walked into Spivak's Bar and Grill and saw a couple of us wrapped up like medicine balls. Or maybe it was piggy night and we were greased and jocked up like bonsai wrestlers. Maybe we were being tossed from one drunken Polack to another. Maybe one of us got dropped and bust a table. Maybe someone got bounced off a wall. Maybe they were playing dunk ball and we were being thrown through paper targets into tubs of water. Maybe it was girlie night and we were on our skateboards aimed at ten pins. "This is disgusting. Dehumanizing. Degrading," he thought. "This should be stopped!" So he made his move. What's he know about it? Did he even think of asking one of us? We would have told him we'd never had it so good. And it wasn't just the money. It was the *fun*!

You have probably never really been thrown. Even as a kid, the nearest we get to it, most of us, is in the water. Our father throws us up in the air when we're in a pool or a lake somewhere, and we push up from his hands with our feet to see how high we can go—then come tumbling down, screeching at the top of our lungs, making the biggest splash we can. Maybe you can remember that. Maybe you'd dive—flip over onto your back, see how far out you could go. With me, though, it was like being shot out of a cannon. I'd go 10, 12 feet into the air. I

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had time to do a swan dive on the way down.

To me, as a kid, being shot from a cannon seemed the most exciting thing in the world. That puff of smoke; that perfect arc; that final, graceful turn. You bounce off the net, land on your feet, throw your arms into the air, and the crowd goes wild. But did you ever see one of us doing it? Of course not, though we would have gone twice as far. Think about it. What kind of jobs do we get? A good friend of mine, a Mexican, was used as a stand-in for one of the gorillas in a Tarzan movie. Talk about degrading. How do you think the Munchkins felt? Or those of us who played in that stupid Shelley Whatsherface's *Snow White and The You Know What*? All I can say is at least those were jobs.

Maybe that's where I got the idea. From seeing those big guys flying through the air, shot out of cannons, padded, helmets on. It was me, you see, who thought it up. It might have gone no further than MacNab's. But I saw it all in my mind. Thousands of us being thrown through the air by the big guys, tossed from one to another, nestled in those manly arms. We'd be screaming, hysterical from the excitement, especially the girls—wrapped up in our bunting, like cats or monkeys or coons. We were cuddly. We were free!

All over now. "It is hereby proclaimed that dwarf-throwing and dwarf-bowling are from this time forth prohibited in public establishments where alcohol is served. By order of the Governor." All the governors signed on. In three years it had spread to every state but Hawaii. Sure, we could have gone to Jamaica where there's a tradition of it going back to Queen Victoria. But would that have been fair? They've got their own people to care for.

The saddest part of the whole thing is that a lot of us formed strong bonds with our handlers. (That's what we called the big guys.) I'm talking about friendship. Not romance, for heaven's sake. It was more a pride, a loyalty, thing. We had these tournaments, you see, with playoffs and buy-outs and trading, even cards. The guys who were into that got salaries you wouldn't believe. Umpires, too. This was toward the end. We kept this whole "series" part of it hush-hush. We knew we couldn't mainstream that. People just weren't ready for it. But before they even found out about it, the bleeding heart from Rochester had done his dirty deed. He wasn't getting through with his letters-to-the-editor. No one picked up on what was going on. Maybe no one believed him. Maybe no one cared. So he had to do something. What he did was get hold of Mrs. Timothy Flannegan and poison her mind.

The girl was Sally Bisko. Beautiful. Short, blond hair. Honey-colored. Weighed 42, 43 pounds. She and Flannegan were so close she was like another arm to him. (I didn't say there was *no* romance.) They were a team. Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Every time he threw her or rolled her down the alley on her board toward those pins, it made you want to cry, it was such a beautiful act. He did it with such tenderness, with so much love. He was a huge guy, Flannegan—tremendous shoulders. He and Sally won every tournament they entered. If there was room enough to swing her, he could throw her 32 feet. If they were playing targets, he'd never miss. Two years and not a single accident, not one dropped catch in the relays. In the bowling, which not everyone did, very few games that left any spares.

They did a lot of touring, being just about the best; but they weren't fooling around. It was a strictly platonic affair. Sally was a Quaker with very high morals; Flannegan, as well as being a good Catholic, was a devoted family man. What's more, his wife knew all about them and what they felt for each other. Yet one day she flew to Minneapolis, where they were playing for two weeks, and burst into their hotel room. There was Sally, curled up in the chair where she always slept, with Tim stretched out under the bed sheets, snoring. But she pulled the pistol out of her purse and shot them dead anyway. She later said she didn't know why she had done it. The two of them never even woke up.

It was one of those crazy things. Crazy for them and ruinous for the rest of us, because of course then everything came out—the tournaments, the gambling, the hanky-panky with some of the customers. The papers had a field day out of it, naturally. And the governor, of course, had to act. It was that bleeding heart in Rochester. She told me herself. He never got through with his letters. So he got hold of Mrs. Timothy Flannegan and made her do his dirty work for him. He must have had some slick tongue, that's all I can say.

Maybe it would have happened anyway. Probably it was too good a thing to last. A little over three years. The Golden Days, we call them. And most of us are still pretty well off, because we saved our money. We're not out on the streets. Nobody's jumping from office buildings, either. Not that we're happy about it. Don't get me wrong. We had such high hopes. Someday, we always said, we'd go public, come out of the closet. Think of it! To be in Friendly's. Or under the Golden Arches! The whole country would recognize the sport for what it was and we'd be like baseball players. But it didn't turn out that way. We got shut down, and now we're out of work. Is that fair? I ask you. Is this America, or what?

Clinton W. Trowbridge writes from Sedgwick, Maine.

LIBERAL ARTS

DON'T PUT OFF TILL TOMORROW THOSE RIGHTS YOU CAN ENJOY TODAY

Procrastination is now a disability, if we can believe Marshall Dickler, attorney for a Northwestern University professor charged with theft. According to the *Chicago Tribune* last January, art history instructor Olan Rand "never got around" to letting the federal government know his mother had died. He was thus able to collect $33,000 in Social Security payments deposited electronically in their joint account between 1981 and 1986.

Dickler calls this "extreme procrastination behavior," which he claims is a manifestation of depression. "Professor Rand is an individual with a disability," Dickler wrote in a complaint filed last December with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The lawyer is trying to get the former professor his job back: although Rand has pleaded guilty to theft, Northwestern dismissed him last year for "a pattern of dishonest behavior."

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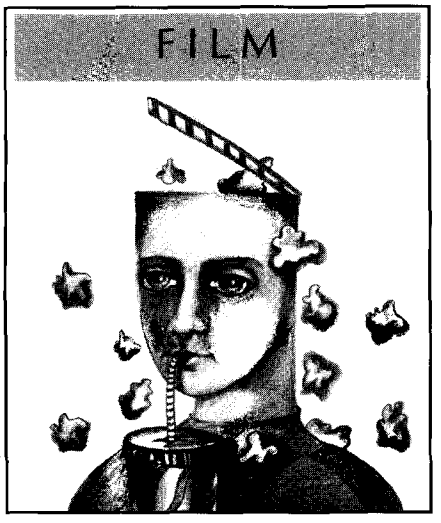

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Horse Plays

by David R. Slavitt

Ulzana's Raid
Produced by Carter De Haven
Directed by Robert Aldrich
Written by Alan Sharp
Released by Universal, 1972

Dances With Wolves
Produced by Jim Wilson and Kevin Costner
Directed by Kevin Costner
Written by Michael Blake
Released by Orion, 1990

No, I haven't lost my mind, or at least that's what I choose to believe. But this hasn't been a terrific month for movie-viewing, and I saw a neat flick on American Movie Classics, a 20-year-old Western I'd never heard of, called *Ulzana's Raid*. Smart, tough, funny, it was all the things that *Dances With Wolves* wasn't. And I'd been thinking of the latter picture, because I watched the Oscar presentations (broadcast from a planet in some ways much like our own) and I saw Richard Gere perform an act of self-parody of such extravagance that I was disappointed afterwards when he didn't pull off his rubber mask and turn out to be Billy Crystal in yet another madcap prank. Gere, you will recall, thought we should broadcast waves of love to the Chinese communists that would cause them to slap their foreheads, realize that they have really been unpleasant to Tibet, and then, presumably, mend their ways. He never took his face off, and, indeed, in the *New York Times* of mid-April, either he or someone with an identical name published an op-ed piece urging us to "uphold the banner of Tibetan freedom."

Well, it's all right with me if these people have views, but when the views get turned into movies, the critic has a right to point out that there have been lapses in taste and judgment. And *Dances With Wolves* got seven academy awards, you will recall, including the prize for best picture. *Ulzana's Raid*, on the other hand, got nothing but the short end of the stick, which is what used to happen to Westerns. (Clint Eastwood's success with *Unforgiven* will, no doubt, spawn a new wave of oaters, or it would if the union rules weren't so unrealistic and if there didn't have to be a double for every horse, cow, buffalo, and pig that we see on the screen—but that's another story.)

So, *Dances With Wolves* . . . I'm sure I never wrote about this before because I avoided it, managed to miss it entirely, which wasn't easy. I'd heard and read enough to know that the Indians are the good guys, noble and ecologically responsible, while the white men are the bad guys, rude, crude, and careless of the ecosystem in which they are working out a sordid caricature of Manifest Destiny. This is funny, perhaps, but not entertaining, as it was funny but not entertaining when, in a section of upper-class undergraduates at the University of Pennsylvania, not a single young man or woman could say where Lisbon is. They knew the names of several extinct tribes of the Amazon, but Lisbon is a European capital and therefore part of Dead White European Men's History, which is to say irrelevant and even offensive. ("On the banks of the Tagus," I prompted, but that got only blank stares.)

So I rented Costner's epic—181 minutes!—and watched it on the very same screen that I had seen Aldrich's cavalrymen and Indians romping and frisking on only a few nights earlier. I was amazed at how crude this picture is in its technical aspects—in what we have come to call the grammar of film. One of the basic rules is that you don't tell the audience in words what it has just seen. If you hear bangs and then see a guy come out of a saloon holding his gut with red stuff oozing down, you get the general sense of what is being portrayed. But if the guy then says, "My God, I've been shot," that's likely to get a laugh out of an audience, not because it is inherently comical but because the character is telling us something that we already know. And Costner's noble lieutenant does this all the time. He's got this journal, see, and he is something like Robinson Crusoe or maybe John Bartram, writing out his deep thoughts and making sketches . . . to tell us what we've just seen.

A whole screen full of dead buffalo! Wow! There they all are, all these carcasses, and even on the small screen of a television set, they look fairly impressive. The shots in the sequence that leads up to this panorama have been nicely built, and we've watched the Sioux dress up, paint themselves, and go out on a buffalo hunt that is at least half-religious in its character. And surprisingly, shockingly, there these dead animals are, strewn across the prairie. We don't need Lieutenant Dunbar's voice-over to let us know that this is not a good thing. "Who would do such a thing?" he asks. "The field was proof enough that it was people without value and without soul, with no regard for Sioux rights."

Not that the Sioux are vegetarians, exactly, but when they kill buffalo, there is lots of soulful French horn music and lush strings, which John Barry has supplied to nudge us toward transcendental splendor. We understand that because they paint their faces and use bows and arrows or spears instead of rifles, they are at one with nature. The buffalo may not appreciate the difference, but Costner makes it clear to even the densest of viewers. "I've never known a people so eager to laugh, so devoted to family, and so dedicated to each other," our young lieutenant says, and then, with an ingratiating aw-shucks kind of gesture, he adds, "and the only word that came to mind was harmony."

The white guys are, to be blunt, inharmonious. They shoot the lieutenant's horse—a heroic horse, a veteran of Civil War battle, and a gift from a Union general to the heroic lieutenant—and they shoot his pet wolf, a critter he has taught to eat from his hand and has named Two Socks. They are so inconsiderate and disagreeable that they destroy the whole country and make impossible the harmonious nomadic life that the Sioux have been living. The audience is then entitled to wallow in just enough guilt to afford an agreeable fris-

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son—we're white, after all, but how many of us were Indian fighters or even buffalo hunters, or how many of our grandparents or great-grandparents? We can send out waves of love, maybe, and uphold the banner of the Sioux—except that, one, they didn't have banners; two, the Pawnees hated them, and virtually every tribe thought that every other tribe was scum, which is why Native Americans hate to be categorized together even as noble victims; and three, they weren't such ecological exemplars after all, but would run whole herds of buffalo over a cliff because they thought it was funny!

Robert Aldrich has not had one of those revered Hollywood careers. He is a journeyman director whose best work was either *The Dirty Dozen* or, if your taste runs this way, *Hush . . . Hush, Sweet Charlotte*. He has also made some eminent turkeys. One of the great hoots of all time, in fact, was his *Sodom and Gomorrah*, from which I remember the imposing Anouk Aimée holding out her bejewelled arms and calling for the attention of her subjects in an unforgettable salutation: "Hebrews and Sodomites!" There was more to the speech, but the queen's words never carry through the gales of the audience's laughter. *Ulzana's Raid*, though less well-known, is probably Aldrich's masterpiece, with an intelligent script by Alan Sharp and one of Burt Lancaster's very best performances as Mr. McIntosh, the guide who goes along with the green Lieutenant DeBuin (Bruce Davison) who has just come out from Philadelphia.

There are lots of similarities between the two films. In a way, each is the story of what its lieutenant learns. Costner's officer discovers the p.c. truth that Indians are finer, truer, nobler human beings than whites, and he marries Stand With Fist and, in the end, goes native. Davison's lieutenant comes out to see whether one can be a Christian and a soldier at the same time, and what he learns, under McIntosh's tutelage, is that this is hard country and the Apaches are hard people. There's no more sense, though, as McIntosh explains, in hating them "than there is in hating the desert because there isn't any water in it." But you do have to know what you're up against.

In other words, Indians are not really the subject of this film. What Sharp and Aldrich are getting at is larger and more interesting—truth, reality, and the duties and constraints of an honorable life in a dark and disagreeable world. When the Apaches talk, they speak in Apache but without the subtitles Costner gives his Sioux. The effect in Aldrich's movie is to distance the Indians, to make them mysterious, which works dramatically because that mystery is what the young lieutenant has to unravel. We are told very early on about the philosophical resonance of what we're watching, when Lancaster tells the major at the fort, "I've seen war parties come in all sizes—the kind with a hundred braves and the kind with one." That is not an easy line to deliver convincingly, but Lancaster's familiar weathered look and his peculiarly athletic slouch make it good. The major says he'll send out a detail as soon as he knows the number and the probable intention of the war party. Lancaster looks up from his coffee mug to let a little sanity back into the conversation, "Their probable intention is to burn, maim, torture, rape, and murder, Charlie."

So the detail goes out, to try to round up Ulzana and his renegades. And we cut back and forth between scenes of mayhem, in which the Apaches torture and kill the settlers in the Arizona bleakness, and scenes of the cavalrymen closing in. There are very few of what advertising agencies call "beauty shots" of Western scenery, which slow down the pace of *Dances With Wolves*. The point here is that this is not an earthly paradise. It is, on the contrary, hard, rugged country (Arizona and Nevada, mostly) with an arid beauty that isn't so immediately forthcoming. The Indians, too, are complicated, acting, as we learn, on the very foreign but not at all contemptible notion that if you kill a man, you take his power—and if you kill him slowly and inflict a great deal of pain, you get more of that power. There isn't any ethnicity in the direction of the Apaches' hatred. It's just what they believe and how they behave—which may or may not be historically correct but which allows for an elegant existential level of drama. The Western, after all, is our version of Greek tragedy, and the subject of the Western is always the closing of the frontier, which is to say the limitations of freedom. Culture and anarchy, civilization and its discontents, the measure and value of a human life—which a man can only keep by being willing to lose it—these are issues every bit as serious and grand as those Aeschylus and Sophocles addressed. When a Western works well, the homely modesty of its setting serves as a kind of ingratiation, so that we don't mind being addressed on so lofty a plane. (Costner's film refuses to take advantage of this strategy and preaches at us whenever it is unsure of the impact of its contrived dramatic turns.)

What happens? It is not, after all, a surprise that Ulzana dies. It's a noble, even grand and ritualistic death. It is not even much of a surprise that McIntosh dies—a truly splendid moment in which Lancaster occupies himself with rolling a cigarette. The impressive turn is that we believe the callow lieutenant has grown up, which is to say that we in the audience have grown up with him, having glimpsed and even to some degree accepted the harsh world that is beyond the theology and imagination of poor Philadelphians. (Philadelphia, these days, is considerably harsher, of course, and we are less deprived of opportunities for philosophical growth.)

A splendid film! Up there with *Ride the High Country*, *The Shootist*, *High Noon*, and *Shane*. Some of those movies are quite famous, and others are not. But, as McIntosh would tell us, it's hard country out there, and one learns to live in it.

David R. Slavitt is a poet and novelist living in Philadelphia.

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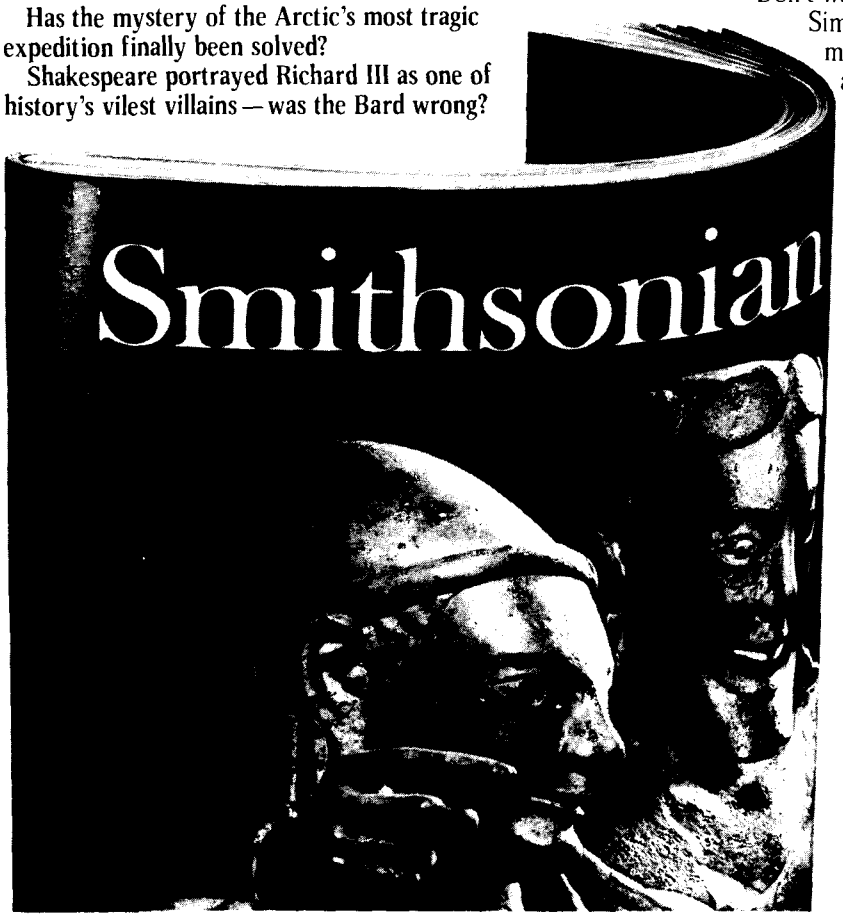

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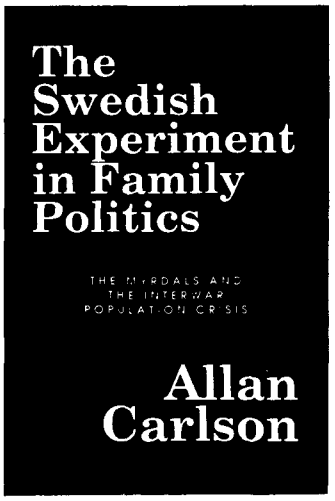

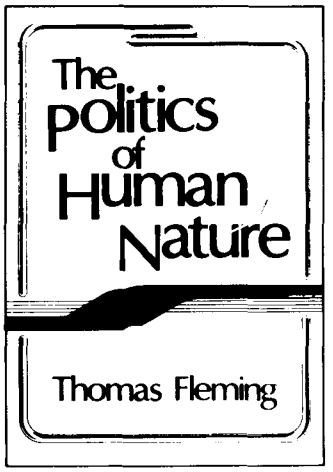

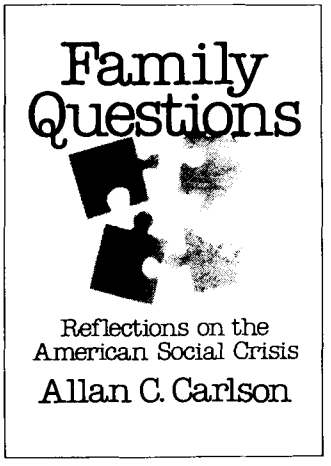

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